

54

A SHORT
ACCOUNT
OF THE
LIFE

O F

Lieutenant ILLIDGE, (R.)

Who was in the

MILITIA
O F T H E

County of Chester

Near Fifty Y E A R S.

Chiefly drawn out of his own
P A P E R S.

L O N D O N,

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ACCOUNT

FILE



T H E
P R E F A C E.

CHRISTIAN READER,

I *T is well observed by the wise Man, Prov. XIV. 10. that the Heart knows its own Bitterness, and its own Fears, Cares, Desires, Joys, and Hopes and Expectations, that as there is Occasion, it is natural and easie to speak or write most feelingly concerning them: These are those Things of a Man, that no Man knoweth, save the Spirit of Man which is in him, 1 Cor. II. 11. which is therefore called the Candle of the Lord, which searcheth all the inward Parts of the Belly, i. e. of his own Heart, Prov. XX. 27. especially*

when this Candle is lighted by the Word and Spirit of God; And when a Person makes it his Business to accomplish a diligent Search, doubtless he may arrive at a certain Knowledge of his own State and Condition, with reference to God, and his Salvation: By observing the Complexion of his own Soul from Time to Time, and looking himself in the Glass of God's Law, he may come to know what manner of Man he is.

The World sees our Ways and Actions, and is apt to be either severe enough on the one Hand, or favourable enough on the other Hand, in their Remarks upon them: But as to this, which is the most hidden, and yet most excellent Part of Man, the Thoughts, the Designs, the various Workings of the Heart, and the secret and solemn Transactions between God and it; here a Man is best able to draw his own Picture, which this good Man had done for his own Use,
in

in the Manuscripts he hath left behind him, that he might know (but not with any Design to make known to others) what manner of Man he was.

What he had done more at large, his Friend hath in this Extract done in Miniature, and taken the Liberty to shew it to the World: This we find done by some, who, for their Eminency in Gifts, and Learning, and Station, have made a much greater Figure in the Church, and in the World; and it hath met with good Acceptance, and been of use for the assisting, quickning, and warning of others. And we are not without Hopes, that this may have the like good Effects, that it will not be despised, but be the more acceptable to some, for its Plainness and Simplicity, as proceeding from an honest Farmer, who was a good Husband of his Time, and was instructed, by the Grace of God, how to cultivate his Soul, as well as his Ground, and suffer neither

to be overgrown with Briers and Thorns: These Thoughts, Expressions, Prayers, and Self-reflections, may suit the Case of many others, as well as his; the Tradesmen, the Farmers, those that are in a publick Post, the aged and infirm, may here meet with Instruction, and especially it may be of Use to work in us such a Sense of Death and Eternity as he had, and, as I think, is not common.

I know it will be a Surprise to many of his Friends; because it represents him to be a better Man, than it may be, they took him to be, tho', I hope, not a better Man than, by the Grace of God, he really was: They saw his Outside, this shews them his Inside; they saw some of his Failings, and remember some of his gross Sins; here they may see, what Bitterness they were to him in the Reflection. And I cannot but expect, that all good Men that loved him, will rejoice and glorify God in him, for the
Grace

Grace given unto him, whereby he was victorious over those foolish and hurtful Lusts, to which too many (the more is the Pity) still continue in Bondage.

The Case minds me of the Apostle's Remarks on Mens Sins and good Works, 1 Tim. V. 24, 25. Some Mens Sins are open before hand, &c. that their Sins are some way open, or they need not come under Censure; and their good Works must be some way manifest, or they can have no Right to Absolution: Of which the Learned Dr. Hammond understands the Text; then by good Works understand such as are the genuine Fruits of an unfeigned Faith, and sound Repentance; for God pardoneth and absolveth such, and only such as truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel.

But then, as to those his Friends and Acquaintance, that have gone a great Length with him in Sin, but yet are not conscious to themselves of such

such Reflexions on themselves, as they find in these Papers; It doth not become me to threaten or judge, but I would with the tenderest Compassion, warn and exhort them, that they would bethink themselves, as they are reading the following Lines; and assure themselves, that there is an eternal Difference between Good and Evil, how industrious soever some may be, to confound the Ideas of them; and that when they come to die, and enter on their eternal State, they must expect no true Peace on any other Terms, than those, on which we trust, this good Man had both Hope and Peace; and on these Terms, Peace be with you. Amen.



THE

T H E
L I F E
O F

Lieutenant R. Illidge

HE was born in *Weston* in the Parish of *Wibunbury* in *Cheshire*; his Father was of *Cherlton*; his Grandmother was of the Pools of *Blackwel*; his Grandfather, his Father, and himself had each four Sons and no Daughter. His Mother was *Cecilia*, Daughter to Mr. *Chesnis* of *Mickley* in *Wrenbury* Parish, who, besides four Sons, had seven Daughters that were all married, had Children, and dy'd Widows.

His Father once intended him for the Ministry, he having a very good Capacity for Learning; but neither his Father's Abilities, nor his own Inclination would permit it. However he made good Proficiency in School-Learning.

When he was about 15 Years of Age, being a younger Brother, he was put Apprentice to a *Shoemaker* in *Nantwich*, whom he serv'd faithfully; and it was a Comfort to him in the Reflection long after that he did so. When he was out of his Time, he went about to divers Cities and Towns, to improve himself in his Trade. At last he came to *London*, where he staid about a Year; and it was a Satisfaction to him in his old Age, to be able to say, that in all that time he did not remember, that he had neglected the religious Observation of one Sabbath; and that he did not keep ill Company, or haunt ill Houses, but delighted in the manly Exercises of Wrestling, Leaping, &c. He was at *London* at the Time of the Return of King *Charles II.* And the Spring following came down to *Nantwich*, married *Mary* the Daughter of *Richard Price*, and Widow of *William Minshul*, and set up his Trade, which he followed 17 Years.

But his Genius led him more to that ancient, innocent, and honourable Employment of Husbandry, which, he saith, was his chief worldly delight; and therefore when he was about 40 Years of Age, he took a Rack Lease of a Farm near *Nantwich*, on which his Father and Mother liv'd and dy'd. It was look'd upon by some of his Friends as a hard Bargain. But, by the Blessing of God upon his great Ingenuity and Industry in improving the Land, he liv'd very comfortably upon it for 30 Years, rejoicing with *Issachar* in his Tents. In the first Year of his Removal into the Country, he

lost very considerably by Suretiship; he said, his Father on his Death-bed gave him much good Counsel to keep the Sabbath, to be obedient to his Mother and Master, and not to take *Tobacco*; (he himself having found great Inconveniencies by it) which he had carefully observ'd; and (said he) if he had given me the same charge against Suretiship which his Father had given him, it might perhaps have prevented that loss.

His Father and Mother were religious, and brought him up in the Fear of God. He relates in some of his Papers, that when he was about 10 or 11 Years of Age, there was a solemn Fast kept in *Nantwich* Church, upon Occasion of a great Drought, where his Father and the Family attended, divers Ministers pray'd and preach'd; but he was particularly affected with a Sermon of Mr. *Burghal's* of *Aston*, (who was afterwards silenced by the Act of Uniformity) his opening the Evil of Sin, and Man's Misery because of it, brought many Tears from his Eyes. He had a Book written by Mr. *Burghal*, called, *The perfect Way to die in Peace*, which, when he was old, he delighted much in. After this he betook himself to secret Prayer, and reading good Books, and took pleasure in hearing the Word, to which he all along continued a good Affection.

After he married and set up his Trade, he was taken into the Militia, and continued an Officer in it to his Death: At the last Muster he observ'd, there was only himself and one more left alive, of about nine Score that were in when he came in. He was of

a lively, active Temper, very bold, and would turn his Back on no Man, but not abusive or quarrellsome ; he lov'd the Soldiers, and they lov'd him ; he took great Pleasure in military Affairs, and had good Judgment in them, which recommended him to the Esteem of his Superior Officers, who lov'd him.

But this prov'd a great Snare to him ; for tho' he fell not into that Height of Profaneness that many do, yet he left off to watch and be sober, and for many Years lived a vain and careless Life, often sitting up till Midnight and Morning, drinking and mis-spending his Time and Money ; excusing it to himself, that this was the way to oblige the Gentlemen, and get an Interest in them, for the promoting of his Trade, having but little to begin the World with. His Reflections upon this long after are : " Happy, thrice
 " Happy are they, who not only remember
 " their Creator in their Youth, but continue
 " to do so from their Youth up ; which I
 " humbly confess, to my Sorrow and Shame,
 " that my Conversation hath been loose and
 " extravagant ; I often ventur'd wickedly
 " upon Sin, against Knowledge and Conscience,
 " and quenched the Spirit, and neglected the Day of Visitation. But this, I
 " can truly say, it was always with Regret
 " and Reluctancy ; I have been a great Sinner,
 " but through Grace, a penitent Sinner ; both my own Sins, and the Sins of
 " others, were a Grief and Trouble to me.
 The chief Thing that induced him to leave off his Trade, and retire into the Coun-

Country, was, because he was weary of this ill course of Life, and desirous to break off from that Company which he found to be a Snare to him; and he found the Benefit of it, and walk'd much more circumspectly afterwards, and kept a more strict Watch upon himself. Such a Day, saith he, " I unhappily fell into ill Company, and, contrary to my Inclinations, Designs, and Resolutions, was overcome by their Enticements to drink to Excess. A Sin I have been often guilty of, and have cause to repent of all my Life long: I have of late Years set my self much against it, and not without Success through Mercy.

— He set down what were the Prayers which, with many Tears, he offer'd up to God on this sad Occasion. " Good Lord, in Mercy, give me Strength and Power to overcome this, and all the Enemies of my Salvation; and hereafter to resist all such wicked and evil Temptations, both from Men and Devils. Lord, Thou art merciful to all true Penitents, but a consuming Fire towards obstinate Sinners; In tender Mercy, look down upon me thy poor, unworthy, sinful Creature, even one of the worst of thy Creation, because I have known thy Will, but have not done it: Now, O Lord, if Thou shouldest be severe and strict with me, I were undone to all Eternity; strike this Rock, O Lord, that the Waters may gush out, even Floods of Tears. O purge me with Hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me in the Blood of Christ, and I shall be whiter than Snow.

He said to one that was no Company-keeper;
 " I wish I had done as you have done ; If
 " I were to live my Life over again, I
 " would never keep Company with those
 " that are given to drinking. — Being once
 at a Feast where full Glasses were press'd, his
 Parish Minister, Mr. Jencks being present,
 took him aside, and beg'd of him not to
 humour such Sots, to his own Damage and
 Danger; this good Caution confirm'd his
 Resolution, and made him more afraid than
 ever of such Company; and through the
 Grace of God, by degrees, he got a Victory
 over Temptations to this Sin.

Let Drunkards that make a Mock at this
 Sin, read this and tremble ; for it will cer-
 tainly be *Bitterness in the latter End*, how
 light soever they make of it, taking a Plea-
 sure, and taking a Pride in making them-
 selves and others drunk, and turning it off
 with a Jest. Let them know, that they must
 either weep for it, and bewail it with
 godly Sorrow, and by a holy Violence us'd
 with themselves, must break off from it, and
 become sober, as this good Man did, or they
 must drink of the Cup of the Lord's Wrath,
 which is pour'd out without Mixture, in a
 Lake of Fire and Brimstone, where there is
 weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of Teeth,
 and not a Drop of Water allow'd to cool
 the Tongue. For whatever they say, the

God of Truth hath said,
 1 Cor. VI. 10. *Drunkards shall not inherit the*
Kingdom of God : They shall
 Deut. XXIX. *not have Peace, who go on to*
 49. *add Drunkenness to Thirst. The*

Wine

Prov. XXIII.

31, 32.

Wine that gives its Colour in
the Cup, at the last bites like
a Serpent.

And let not those who are unhappily entangled in Temptations to this Sin, despair of getting a Victory over it, through the Grace of God, which shall not be wanting to those that desire it, and pray for it, as this good Man did, and are careful and faithful in the use of proper means, for the improving of that Grace. Those that are acceptable to their Company, as he was; and upon that Account, are courted and respected in Company, have need to double their Guard, lest under Pretence of obliging their Friends, and entertaining them, and improving themselves and others by Conversation, they wrong and ruin their own Souls.

And let those who are out of the way of Temptations of this kind, keep themselves so, and bless God, that they are so happy as to be Strangers to this Sin, and hope the best concerning others whom they see entangled in it, that they repent in secret of their Folly, and that they may yet, through the Help of divine Grace, recover themselves out of this Snare of the Devil, in which so many are led, and held captive by him.

When he had attain'd to the Age of 57, at which Age, both his Father and Mother dy'd, that Consideration with some others, awakened him to a serious Concern about his great Change, and his everlasting State, and consequently to a closer Application to the Business of Religion; then he began to be more diligent and serious than before, in Prayer,

Reading, and other devout Exercises; It was then about the Year 1694, that he set himself to write down his Reflections and Observations upon himself, his Meditations and pious Breathings towards God, Memorandums of the Sermons he heard, and very large Collections out of the Scripture, and other good Books he read, with some Account of remarkable Providences. This Practice he continued from that Time to his Death, which was about 15 Years; and has left behind him Seven Books, Three Quarto's, and Four Octavo's fairly written, which shew him to be a Man, whose Heart was very much upon another World, and who made it his great Care to prepare for that World.

The Reasons he gives for employing himself thus are, because he had made it his chief End to honour the great God of Heaven and Earth; and his chief Business to endeavour the Salvation of his own precious and immortal Soul; because he would often meditate on Death, that he might prepare for his great Change; because he would thus employ his vacant Hours, that he might keep from Idleness, and keep out of idle Company. He hoped likewise, that this Practice would increase his Knowledge, strengthen his Faith, and give him more Hopes of Salvation. He also hoped it might be beneficial to his Grand-children, whom he desired to take the same Method.

Much of what he wrote, being transcrib'd out of the Bible and other good Books, which might be thought needless, since

Since the Passages might be better read in their proper Places, he thus excuseth for it; That he transcrib'd those Things which he was himself most affected with; and which when they were collected and put together, would be the more ready for his Use and Meditation; that the writing of them over, would better settle them, and fix them in his Memory; that both the writing and reading of them, was pleasant and delightful to him: and that the Time he employed therein, would, if not thus spent, in all Probability, be worse spent. I with others would be prevail'd with, to use the same Expedient for the same good Purposes.

The Motto he wrote on his Books was, *Piety is the Way to Prosperity both now and hereafter.* And thus he writes, "Should I fill my Head with good Thoughts, and this Book with good Sayings and Sentences; yet unless my Heart be fill'd with Sincerity and holy Zeal, it is all as nothing. When he stay'd at Home on the *Lord's Day* in the Afternoons, which he often did, while he liv'd in the Country, that his whole Family might go to Church, he spent his Time in this pious and profitable Exercise.

And we shall now have little more to say of him, but what shall be gather'd out of his own Papers, and delivered in his own Words, which, it is hoped, may be regarded by some that had a Kindness for him, and may make good Impressions upon them, which may abide. We shall only glean some Passages out of many of the

same Purport; and for more Clearness, reduce them to proper Heads.

I. His deep Concern about his Soul and Eternity. His Soul was his Darling, for thus he writes:

“ O my Soul, my precious Soul, shall I
 “ hazard thee for all the Good that is in
 “ the World? Surely there is an immortal
 “ Spirit dwelling in this fleshly Tabernacle,
 “ of more Value than all earthly Things,
 “ for it must live to all Eternity, either in
 “ Bliss or Wo. This never-dying Soul I
 “ value above all things here below; there
 “ is no greater Folly or Madness practis’d in
 “ this World, than over-caring for the Bo-
 “ dy, and neglecting the immortal Soul:
 “ The Body hath no Assurance of Life
 “ one Moment, nor of that Dross and Dung
 “ which most Men so inordinately cover,
 “ which is transitory and fading, and not to
 “ be compar’d with our eternal Concern.
 “ Even Heathens by the Light of Nature,
 “ did set a great Value upon the Soul of
 “ Man; and shall not I then, who own my
 “ self to be a Christian, have the Light of
 “ the Gospel, and the Knowledge of Christ,
 “ and many other Benefits which tend to
 “ the Advantage of my Soul; shall not I
 “ above all Things prize and take care of
 “ my immortal Soul? Sad and miserable is
 “ their Condition, who neglect their own
 “ Souls, as the Generality of Men do. O
 “ my Soul, let it be thy chief and continual
 “ Care to seek and secure Heaven.

As he was walking in his Fields, and looking on his Improvements, he said to a Friend that was with him, *All prospers if the Soul prosper.* "The most precious and valuable Thing, that I am concern'd for in this World, is my immortal, never-dying Soul; which must fare in the next World according as I behave my self in this. O! it is Rest for my precious and immortal Soul, which I desire and aim at above all Things whatsoever. He admir'd at those who spend their precious Time, so contrary to Reason and their own interest, when their immortal Souls lie at Stake, and are in Danger to be lost to all Eternity. "All my Concerns here below (saith he) will shortly end in Death, and therefore 'tis my Soul, that I set so high a Value upon, as the most precious Jewel in the World, bought with the precious Blood of the Son of God.

He writes this Saying of Mr. Mede's, "O take heed thou art not found overvaluing other Things, and undervaluing thy precious Soul; shall thy Flesh, nay, thy Beast, be beloved, and thy Soul slighted? as if a Man should feed his Dog, and starve his Child.

In a Letter to his Friend, who was concern'd for his spiritual State, there are these passages: "I have read over and over your good Advice and seasonable Admonitions. I take them very kindly, and give you great Thanks, and do bless God, and shall do upon my Knees, that any take so much Care of my immortal Soul. I may well
"take

" take it as a Message from God, whose
 " Assistance I humbly beg in the Perfor-
 " mance thereof, with your continued Pray-
 " ers on my Behalf, against all the Enemies
 " of my Salvation. With God's Assistance,
 " I shall endeavour to observe and keep your
 " Instructions, which are both necessary and
 " pious; your Reproofs sharp, but just and
 " real; should I go about to vindicate my
 " past Course of Life, it is vain; had I done
 " any Thing that were well, I am but an
 " unprofitable Servant, but shall daily beg
 " for Repentance and Amendment of Life.
 " I desire Two Things of you, 1st, A fre-
 " quent Part in your Prayers. 2^{dly}, When
 " you see or hear of any Thing amiss in my
 " Conversation, that you would reprove
 " me sharply, I shall take it kindly. So he
 " writes, tho' to an inferiour,

Decr. 16. 1690.

II. His Exercise and Expressions of Repen- tance.

" It is my Heart's Desire (saith he) to re-
 " pent of all my Sins. And I humbly and
 " earnestly beg of God, that he would here-
 " in assist me with his holy Spirit. 'Tis
 " with Sorrow and Shame, that I call to
 " mind my Sins, the Sins of my whole Life,
 " humbly confessing them to Almighty
 " God. Lord, I repent, help my Repent-
 " anee, and make it sincere; Lord, I repent,
 " accept my Repentance through my bles-
 " sed Saviour; in whose Merits is my only
 " Hope of Salvation. Lord, I repent, in-
 " crease my Repentance, that I may mourn
 " for

for my Sins all my Days. Lord, I heartily grieve for them, and stedfastly purpose, by thy Grace, to lead a new Life. O seal my Pardon in the Blood of my Saviour, whom I stedfastly believe in. Lord, accept Sighs for Tears; O that I could weep a Flood of Tears for my Sins! O wicked Wretch that I am, who shall deliver me from this Body of Sin and Death? I desire to continue my Repentance to my last Moment, and to die repenting.

He writes many Passages out of the Books he read concerning Repentance: As thus: True Repentance is a Change of the whole Man, the Judgment, Will, Affections, Conversation; it turns a Man not only from this or that particular Sin, but from all Sin: He whose Mind and Desires was before to fulfil the Lusts of the Flesh, and to prosper in the World, and to enjoy the Pleasures of it, now strive as hard to kill those Desires; takes the World for Vanity and Vexation, and turns it out of his Heart. No Sin is rightly kill'd, till the Love of every Sin is kill'd. True Repentance is turning to God, and setting our Hearts and Hopes on Heaven; so that we now love Holiness, and seek God's Kingdom above all Things in this World. To say we repent, and not to reform; to be sorry for Sin to Day, and return to it to Morrow, is but counterfeit Repentance.

Many Confessions and Lamentations of Sin we find in his Papers, with Petitions for Mercy; such as these.

“O

" O God, when I call to mind the Sins
 " of my Youth, the many and great Offences,
 " which I ungratefully committed against
 " Thee my God ; and when I consider my
 " present State, how subject I am to Fail-
 " ings and Infirmities, and how apt I am
 " to come short of my good Designs and
 " Resolutions, I am almost ready to de-
 " spair, and am full of Doubts and Fears ;
 " but when I call to mind thy Goodness and
 " Mercy, and the Sufferings of my blef-
 " sed Redeemer for me, I conceive some
 " Hopes.

" Lord, I am a sinful unworthy Creature,
 " that have made no suitable Returns for
 " the great and many Mercies I have re-
 " ceived from Thee all the Days of my
 " Life. Thou mightest justly have cut me
 " off, and thrown me into utter Darkness
 " long ago ; but, good Lord, pardon my
 " Sins, and be reconciled to me, through the
 " Merits of my blessed Saviour. I have too
 " much pamper'd this perishing Body, and
 " have taken too much Delight in the Va-
 " nities of this sinful World, little regard-
 " ing the Shortness and Uncertainty of
 " my Life, and the Greatness of that Ac-
 " count I have shortly to make. My good
 " Desires, Endeavours and Resolutions are
 " often frustrated and disappointed, Tem-
 " ptations overcome me ; these are my daily
 " Grief : There is nothing in this World
 " that troubles me more than Sin ; good
 " Lord, remedy and amend all that is amiss
 " in me, for Jesus' sake.

O my Soul, seek thou the Lord, humble thy self before him, beg for his Grace, without which I can do nothing. Lord, I repent, and am ashamed when I look back and consider, how vile and wicked a Creature I have been, the many and great Sins I have committed, none of which are hid from thine All-seeing Eye; my Sins of Omission and Commission, of Weakness and Willfulness; many in Number, heinous in Nature; Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me thy poor sinful Servant; who am not worthy to breath in thine Air, or to take thy holy Name into my polluted Lips.

I cannot melt into Tears, as I should for my Sins; but when I consider, what my dear Saviour suffered for my Sake; I find my Mind greatly troubled, and the Hardness of my Heart is my Grief, where must I seek for Succour, but from Thee, my God, O help me, and deliver me for thy Mercies sake. Thou art the only Physician that canst heal all Maladies, O heal this hard distracted Heart of mine, compose it, mollify it, make it such as Thou wouldest have it for Christ's sake.

I have known the Will of my heavenly Father, but have not done it; therefore deserve to be *beaten with many Stripes*. O let me with Regret and Sorrow look back upon a loose ill spent Life, which I must be afflicted in Soul for now, and must amend, or suffer for to Eternity. O let me cry out with the Jaylor, *What shall I do to be saved?*

When

' When I look back and consider the Num-
 ' ber and Greatness of my Sins, I cannot but
 ' admire the Mercy of God in sparing me
 ' so long : O how often have I provoked his
 ' great Majesty to be angry with me, till
 ' he had destroyed me, and cast me into
 ' Hell; but he hath spared me, because his
 ' Mercy and Compassions never fail; ever
 ' blessed, praised, glorified, and magnified be
 ' thy great and holy Name.

' Lord, give me hearty Sorrow for all my
 ' Offences, and grant that I may never be
 ' at Peace with my self, till I am at Peace
 ' with thee.

' I find a Law, that when I would do
 ' Good, Evil is present with me; when I
 ' address my self to any spiritual or hea-
 ' venly Employment, when I design to draw
 ' nigh to God, and promise my self Com-
 ' fort in Communion with him, then is
 ' Evil present. Could I but enjoy a Freedom
 ' from it in the Season of my Duty, and the
 ' Time of my Communion with God, what
 ' a Comfort would it be! But then am I
 ' molested with Wandrings and Distracti-
 ' ons, then is Sin most busie. O this is my
 ' great Misery and Burthen. Good Lord,
 ' help me out of these Troubles.

' Two Things lie very heavy upon me
 ' at this present, and greatly trouble me;
 ' Ingratitude under great Mercies, and Im-
 ' penitence under great Sins; Lord, help
 ' me under these great Straights.

' I strive against Sin, but am often over-
 ' come; fight, but am often foil'd; Lord, af-
 ' flict

sist me in my spiritual Warfare, and make me a Conquerour.

'The longer I live, the more sensible I am of my own Frailties and Infirmities, Hardness of Heart, Distraction in Duty, want of Zeal in the Service of God; these are my Grievances; the *Spirit willing*, but the *Flesh weak*. *O wretched Man that I am! My Sin is ever before me*. But I am resolv'd; by the Help of God, it shall have no Rest or Quiet in my Heart; I will continue to fight against Sin and Satan, and all the Enemies of my Salvation; and tho' like the Sons of Zeruiah, they are *too hard for me*; yet I will daily beg and pray for thy Help, O Lord, and the Assistance of thy holy Spirit against them, without which, I can do nothing that is good.

'*Mine Iniquities are gone over my Head, as a heavy Burden, they are too heavy for me: but I will declare mine Iniquity, I will be sorry for my Sin.*

III. His particular Striving against the Sin of Passion, and Hastiness of Spirit.

'Lord, Thou knowest my Frame (saith he) 'I humbly confess to my Shame and Grief, that I have been passionate, and impatient; 'tis a Misery that has too much attended me in the whole Course of my Life; The Lord in Mercy pardon me, and change my corrupt vile Nature; Lord, give me Patience and Meekness, and a humble Spirit, that I may bear with Submission all the Afflictions that come from Thee,

' Thee, my God, and all the Disturbances
 ' and Injuries that are offer'd me by Men.
 — Through the Grace of God, he got
 very much the Mastery of this Corruption
 towards his latter End.

' I bless the Lord (saith he) I do what
 ' lies in me to live at Peace with all Men;
 ' I am willing to bear many Wrongs, and
 ' freely forgive all Men that have done me
 ' Wrong, and were I satisfied, that I had
 ' wrong'd any Man, I would freely make Re-
 ' stitution. I wish Harm to no Man, if any do
 ' to me, I pray God forgive them, for I
 ' freely do, as I desire to be forgiven my
 ' self. I confess through Passion, I may jar
 ' with a Neighbour, but I dare not bear
 ' Malice, or harbour Revenge in my Heart,
 ' against any Man living, nor ever had one
 ' Suit or Trial with any Man in any Court,
 ' in all my Life.

' I have read (saith he) of a good Man,
 ' who, when one wonder'd at his exceeding
 ' great Patience in bearing Injuries, an-
 ' swered, when my Heart is ready to rise
 ' against those that have done me Wrong,
 ' I presently begin to think of the Indigni-
 ' ties and Injuries that were done to Christ,
 ' which he bore patiently for me; If my
 ' own Servant should pluck my Bread, or
 ' smite me on the Face, yet this were no-
 ' thing to what my Saviour suffered; and
 ' I never leave off thinking on this, till my
 ' Mind is still and quiet — Who am I,
 ' that I should not be crossed?

He found great Advantage against this
 in, by the frequent receiving of the *Lord's-*
upper; for (saith he) 'When I meet with
 Wrongs and Abuses, Affronts and Injuries,
 they disturb and vex my Mind, and often
 put me into a Passion; and then in haste,
 I threaten to go to Law; but I presently
 consider that I am a Christian, that I was
 lately at the *Lord's Table*, and must appear
 there again ere long, if not prevented by
 Sicknels or Death, and how dare I then
 harbour Malice and Revenge? Then I soon
 alter my Mind, for my great Creator hath
 said, *Vengeance is mine*, and my blessed Sa-
 viour hath strictly charged us to love our E-
 nemies, and bless them that curse us.

IV. *His Doubts and Fears about his Spiritual*
State, with his good Hopes and Resolutions.

'When I inspect the State of my Soul,
 (saith he) 'Doubts and Fears arise, especial-
 ly, when I recollect the Number and
 Greatness of my Sins, and observe the pre-
 sent Hardness of my Heart, and Dryness of
 my Eyes, I am subject to a wandring Fancy
 and Distractions in Duty, God seems to
 frown and to withdraw himself from me;
 'tis Sin that is the only Cause of this my
 present Misery; but when I think of God's
 Mercies and Christ's Merits, and the com-
 fortable Promises of the Gospel, my Hope
 revives. Lord, my Sins are great, but thy
 Mercies are greater; therefore I will never
 despair; if I perish, it shall be at thy Feet.
In thee, O Lord, do I put my Trust, let me never
be confounded.

' I seldom miss any Opportunity of coming to the *Lord's Table*, but I want that sensible Joy and Communion with God, which many good Christians have, and that inward Comfort, which is of more Value than all the Riches in the World. My Heart is hard, my Affections dull, I am often lukewarm, and unfit for holy Duties; Lord, it is Thou alone that canst help me, and vain is any other Help; of my self I can do nothing; I have none to fly to but to Thee; Christ is the Rock on which my Foundation shall be laid: O pluck me as a Brand out of the Fire. Thou hast said, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest.* These are comfortable Words to a poor Sinner; assist me by thy Spirit, good Lord, that I may embrace them, and rightly apply them.

' O when will the happy Time come, that I shall be set at Liberty from Sin and Corruption, from the Body and the World? When will the Cares of this Life cease to trouble me; that I may repose in God? His Love and Favour is the greatest Comfort in this World, that will make a Death-bedeasy, and dying Hours comfortable.

' It is the great Mercy of God, that hath supported me under many Temptations; I have oft fallen, but through the Goodness of God I have risen again: I have been long troubled with Doubts and Fears, yet have not despair'd of God's Mercy. Let not his Goodness encourage me to Presumption or vain Hopes, or to think my

my own Case better than really it is ; but put me upon striving to enter in at the strait Gate, and working out my Salvation with Fear and trembling, that I may make my Calling and Election sure, while it is call'd to Day, because the Night is very near, when I shall work no more. Lord, give me Grace, tho' I want Comfort.

It was some Encouragement to him when he read the Lives of good Men, to find that they had the same Exercises, particularly that of Mr. *Philip Henry* ; ' If such an eminent holy Man (said he) that liv'd a Life of Communion with God, yet complain'd of Wandrings and vain Thoughts in Duty, &c. I will not despond who have the same Burdens to complain of.

He also took Comfort from a Passage he transcrib'd from the present Lord Bishop of *Coventry and Litchfield*, which was this ; ' The strongest Encouragement of our Endeavours towards Heaven is, that all our Defects shall be supply'd by the infinite Merits of our Lord and Saviour, who knows the Infirmities of our Nature, takes the Will for the Deed, and admits honest Endeavours in lieu of perfect Obedience. The Goodness of God is infinite, and his Mercy is over all his Works.

' I believe (saith he) that vain and groundless Hope of Salvation is the Ruin of many, who say, they hope in Christ, but keep not his Commandments ; whereas it is not saying, Lord, Lord, that he will accept, but doing the Will of our
Fa-

' Father; it is not my Prayers, nor my
 ' Reading good Books, nor writing good
 ' Things, that will bring me to Heaven
 ' without Faith and Repentance, and serv-
 ' ing God in Sincerity.

V. *His Self-examination and Evidences for
 Heaven.*

' Were I capable (saith he) I would write
 ' something of the Hardness and Deceitful-
 ' ness of Man's Heart, since I can say so
 ' much on that Subject by woful Experience,
 ' for it hath been a continual Trouble to
 ' me most of my Days. The Heart (saith
 ' one) is that which the Eye of God is, and
 ' the Eye of a Christian ought to be chee-
 ' ly fix'd upon. Many an earnest Prayer
 ' I have put up to God to soften this sto-
 ' ny Heart, and fix this wandring Mind. O
 ' that at length my Heart might be wrought
 ' into a right Frame. Could I win my
 ' Heart to God, and keep my Heart with
 ' God, I should think my self a happy Man.
 ' I pray daily that God would *create in me a*
 ' *clean Heart, and renew a right Spirit within*
 ' *me.* O that I could obtain the Favour of
 ' God, and Communion with him, which I
 ' value more than all the Riches of this
 ' World. The Light of his Countenance,
 ' an Interest in Christ, and the Assistance
 ' of his holy Spirit, I desire above all
 ' worldly Treasures.

' Lord, Thou knowest all the Secrets of my
 ' Heart, and all my Thoughts afar off, all
 ' my present Designs and Purposes, which,
 ' I hope, are well intended; but I want thine
 ' Af-

Assistance: The Heart is deceitful, and doubtless mine as bad as any; how then shall I judge of my spiritual State, which most judge too favourably of their own Case! If the Heart be fill'd with Sin, and so continues with Delight, there is no Room or Habitation for God and Christ in it. O that I could put away all the Evil of my Doings, and repent with that Repentance, which is not to be repented of. So far as I know my own Heart, these are my unfeigned Desires; help and assist me, O God, for thy Mercies sake; let thy Strength appear in my Weakness.

Let me not censure others, (saith he) but begin at Home, and examine my own Conscience, and judge my own Heart. I am in the Sight and Presence of God, whose All-seeing Eye beholds all my Thoughts, Words and Actions, and it is dangerous to dissemble with God, or flatter my self.

Mr. Corbit's Enquiry into the State of his Soul, was of great Use to him in this Part of his Work. 'Doubts and Fears arise, (saith he) I feel many Conflicts between Flesh and Spirit, and tho' the Flesh often prevails in some particular Instances, yet I trust, through Grace, the Spirit hath the predominant Power. Vain Thoughts, unruly Passions, often intrude into my Heart, but they are unwelcome Guests there, and soon turn'd out. I hope, I shall never offend my God willingly, and that I do not delight or allow my self in any known Sin.

' Some

“ Some of my weak imperfect Evidences
 “ for Heaven (saith he) are these: (1.) My
 “ Hope is built purely upon the Mercy of
 “ God, and the Merits of Christ. (2.) My
 “ Designs, Endeavours, and Resolutions are
 “ frequently good. (3.) It is my Desire,
 “ Delight, and Practice to hear the Word
 “ of God preach’d. (4.) I have a great E-
 “ steem for all that Love and Fear God,
 “ of what Perswasion soever. (5.) When I
 “ have done any Action that I think is plea-
 “ sing to God, ’tis my great Joy and Heart’s
 “ Delight. (6.) When I have done any ill
 “ Action, or committed any Sin, it is the
 “ Grief of my Soul. (7.) It is a very great
 “ Trouble to me, to hear the Name of God
 “ profaned, or his Word undervalued, or
 “ Evil spoken of. (8.) I have been always
 “ averse to Law-Suits, and to my Power, am
 “ a Peace-maker. (9.) I have been always
 “ willing and desirous to keep Holy the
 “ *Lords-day*. (10.) There is not that Person
 “ living that I envy or hate, or seek to be
 “ reveng’d on; if any hate me, I pray God
 “ forgive them, for I forgive them freely.
 “ (11.) Tho’ I have been a vile Sinner, yet,
 “ I hope, I can truly say, that I am a peni-
 “ tent Sinner, and desire from the Bottom of
 “ my Heart to sorrow for all my Sins, and to
 “ amend my Life; good Lord, help me so
 “ to do. (12.) I had rather have a Heart to
 “ love God above all, to love him perfectly,
 “ than have all the Riches, Honours, and
 “ Pleasures in this World. I would rather
 “ lose all Things, than the Grace and Fa-
 “ vour of God, and the Benefit of Christ,
 “ and

and the holy Spirit. I hope, I can truly say with Mr. *Corbet*, as far as I am able to discern my own Heart and Ways, I have chosen the Lord for my Portion; I take up my Rest in him, and not in the Creature; to love, fear, and admire, and bless him, and to have Communion with him, is my chief Joy. I am heartily grieved for loving God so little; yet I am certain, I love nothing more than God; and in my Esteem and Choice, I prefer a spiritual heavenly Life above all Things upon Earth.

'Lord, I love Thee, for I am grieved at thy Absence, and rejoice in thy Presence, I love those that are like Thee; I love the Place and Duties where Thou art wont to meet thy People; I am grieved when Thou art dishonoured by my self or others; I would have a Heart to love; and look, and long for thy coming and appearing in Glory.

His particular Actions he examined by the twelve Questions in Mr. *H's Communicant's Companion*, Chap. 4. which he transcribed and enlarg'd upon concluding: 'I have, to the best of my Knowledge, examin'd my self upon these Queries, and find that in many Things I have fallen short, through Negligence and humane Frailty; but in some Things, Conscience witnesseth for me, that according to my Ability, I have kept my Integrity; and I trust for the Time to come, that through the Assistance of Almighty God, I shall walk more circumspectly.

VI. His Contentment with his Lot, and gracious
Contempt of this World.

Though he lived upon a Rack-rent, yet he was very well pleased with the little he had of this World. Thus he writes: 'It hath been my great Happiness, through the Goodness of God to me, that my Passage through the World thus far, hath been mostly pleasant and plentiful; I have had ~~Agar's~~ Desire, neither Poverty nor Riches, being ever content with what God appointed for me. I always had a very grateful Esteem of my own Condition, and have not been subject to murmur and repine.

'It is my Trouble (saith he) that the Care and Business of the World doth often take my Thoughts off from better Things; but I am endeavouring to bring my worldly Affairs into less Compass, that I may hang the World loose about me, may use it as if I us'd it not; setting my Affections on Things above, and seeking first the Kingdom of God, not doubting, but that then other Things shall be added;

'There is not one Day of entire Peace in these Things, but either something troubles, or nothing satisfies; we may be happy without Riches and Honours, but cannot be happy without Grace: 'Tis Madness in Men to lose their immortal Souls for the Dross and Dung of this World. He that sets his Heart upon this World, can never seek the World to come as he ought: Therefore, O my Soul, use all the Care and Diligence imaginable, to take thine Affections off from the Vanities of this World.

Thus

Thus little do the Things of Time appear to those, to whom the great Things of Eternity are reveal'd by Faith.

Arch-Bishop Tillotson saith, ' Nothing doth so besot the Mind, and extinguish in it the Sense of divine Things, as sensual Pleasures do; if we fall in Love with them, they will steal away our Hearts from God. Let my Soul therefore despise the World, and devote it self wholly to the Fear and Service of God.

' Worldly Things often hinder the good Designs of good Men, and as for bad Men, they carry them headlong to Ruine; for they swim down the Stream of Pleasure, not considering what Account they have to make, nor how it will be with them, when they lie gasping and groaning on their Death-beds.

He had but little (in Comparison) of the good Things of this present Time, yet he often said, ' I have enough of this World, and as much as I desire: And that he would not thank any one to give him 100 l. per Annum, for (said he) ' I have enough to maintain me, and am content with it; and if I had such an Addition to what I have, instead of doing me good, it might perhaps do me hurt. Thus Godliness with Contentment is great Gain; tis all the Wealth in the World, they that think what they have, enough, have enough, and who would desire more. Happy they who bring their Mind to their Condition.

VII. *His private Devotions.*

It appears by his Papers that he convers'd much with God in Solitude. Thus he writes in 1698. 'It is my Desire, my real Purpose and full Resolution, to do these two things for the future, as God shall enable me: (1.) To fall down upon my Knees three times a Day to pray and give Thanks to God; so *Daniel* did, and *David* Evening and Morning, and at Noon. (2.) That the first and last Thoughts of every Day shall be of God; and that as soon as I lie down to sleep, I will call to mind the Passages of the Day; and how can I spend my Time better when I lie awake in the Night, than in communing with God and my own Heart. I know the fittest Posture for Prayer is upon our Knees; yet, I believe, God will accept of Prayers and Ejaculations from his People at any Time in any Place, if they come from an upright Heart.

'I bless God (saith he) according to my Abilities, I frequently make my Addresses to my great Creator, tho' I am unworthy to take his holy Name into my polluted Lips: I am sensible of my Insufficiency for Prayer, yet, I hope, my merciful Father will accept me, for he regards not so much the Words of Prayer, as the Heart and the Spirit of Prayer; and he rejects no humble faithful Suppliant, be his Speech never so weak; even broken Words will serve, if they come from a broken Heart. Prayer without Sincerity is a Lie to God. Lord, give me Wisdom from above, and teach me to pray, so that my Prayers may

be

' be acceptable to 'Thee, my God, that every
' prayer may come warm from the Heart,
' may be an *effectual fervent Prayer*, which
' *availeth much*. If we employ both Head
' and Heart in the Service of our Prayers,
' (saith he) ' then we may pray at all Times,
' and in all Places; whenever we have a
' Heart to pray to God, he has an Ear to
' hear; it is the Heart God requires in this
' Duty, for a dead dull heartless Prayer is
' an Abomination unto the Lord.

He much esteem'd a Book, called *The Liberty of Prayer*, written by Mr. Jencks of Harley, read it much, and wrote many excellent Passages out of it. He was for praying *always with all Prayer*, and despised neither Prayers by a Form, nor extempore Prayers, thinking each to have their Excellencies at several Times, and that he who truly loves Prayer, will truly love both.

In his Family he prayed daily, and usually read the Scriptures, or caus'd them to be read, and sung Psalms. There he us'd *mixt Prayer*, as Dr. Fuller calls it, partly a Form, which he wrote down in his Book, containing the essential Parts of Prayer, which always remained unalter'd, but adding many moveable Petitions to it, as the Spirit of God enabled him, and as there was Occasion.

' A pryerless Family (saith he) is no better
' than a Beast-house; and indeed a Den of
' Thieves, where God is rob'd of his
' Tribute and their Souls of the Benefit: He
' that wil undertake to prove that Prayer is
C 3 ' need-

' needles in Families, shall oblige them to
' be his humble Servants, or any one's, but
' his that made them.

VIII. *His Worship of God in publick.*

He attended the publick Worship of God in his Parish-Church every *Lords-day*, and was sure to come early; tho' he was near two Miles distant from it, yet he could say, he had never been absent from it any *Lord's-day* of seven Years, except twice, and then his Occasions called him to other Parish-Churches. In the Afternoon, when he liv'd in the Country, he often stay'd at Home, that he might send all his Family to Church, because he thought, he could spend his time better at Home, than any of them could; but when he came to live in the Town, he constantly went to Church both Parts of the Day, and, at Noon on the *Lord's-day*, a Chapter was read to his Family, a Psalm sung, and concluded with Prayer.

He wrote down, when he came home, the Text, and what he could remember of the Sermons he heard, that he might have the Benefit and Comfort of reviewing them afterwards.

But he was in a special manner exemplary, for his diligent and serious Attendance on the Ordinance of the *Lord's-Supper*; which he rarely omitted whenever there was an Opportunity for it in his Parish-Church, which usually was Eight Times a Year, and he made very solemn Preparation for it. Much of what he has left behind him in Writing, is Sacramental Meditations, partly his own, and partly gathered out of good Books;

Books; Mr. Gouge's, Mr. Flavel's, Mr. Shower's, and others.

'According to the dying Charge of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, (saith he) I do frequently attend at the Lord's Table, and do that *in Remembrance of him*, as he hath required. Lord, I dislike none of thy Commands, they are all good and reasonable; but I find fault with my own wicked Heart, that I do not more heartily love, and more readily obey them. I bless the Lord, I have been seldom absent from his Table these many Years, and have found great Benefit by frequent Communion. I am sorry when I see but a small Appearance at the *Lord's-Supper*. Some are absent, because they love their Sins and will not part with them, and so slight their Souls; others, because they over-charge their Hearts with the Cares of this World. Mr. Jenks our Minister told us, all worldly Business is either lawful or unlawful; That which is unlawful, in the Name of God renounce it; that which is lawful and used with Moderation, rather fits a Man for the *Sacrament* than otherwise: Others are absent upon a Mistake, that they can never be well prepared to receive.

He usually spent one Day in Fasting and Prayer in secret before the *Lord's-Supper*; and sometimes two. 'These two Days (saith he) I desire to set apart for the Worship and Service of God, with a full Purpose to make what Preparation I can, by the Grace of God, for receiving the holy Sacrament

' of the *Lord's-Supper*. To that End, I will,
 ' as God shall enable me, humble my self,
 ' and with Sorrow and Shame, confess my
 ' manifold Sins to my merciful Father, who
 ' is a Sin-pardoning God ; I am ashamed,
 ' and do repent of all my Sins ; and it is
 ' my Heart's Desire not only to confess
 ' them, but to forsake, detest, and abhor all
 ' manner of Sin whatever. Lord, grant
 ' that I may not bring one beloved Sin to
 ' thy Table. Thou hast promised Pardon to
 ' all that truly repent, and eternal Life to all
 ' that believe in thy Son ; behold, O Lord,
 ' I heartily repent of my Sin, and sted-
 ' fastly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ,
 ' putting my whole Trust in him alone for
 ' Salvation. Enable me, O Lord, by thy
 ' Grace, to persevere to the End, that I may be
 ' blessed for ever, through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Thus he writes ; ' To Morrow is a Day
 ' of great Concern, not for our Bodies but
 ' our Souls, for we are to meet the Lord at
 ' his own Table. O with what Humility,
 ' Reverence, Repentance, Faith, Charity,
 ' ought we to appear there ? I have en-
 ' deavoured to prepare my self, setting this
 ' Day apart for Prayer and Meditation, es-
 ' sially on the Sufferings of my dear Sa-
 ' viour for my Sins, both in his Life and
 ' at his Death. I hope that my Striving
 ' and Struggling is a Sign, that I am not
 ' dead in Trespasses and Sins ; for a dead
 ' Man strives not. I beg of God often and
 ' heartily, that I may be upright in all my
 ' Duties. — But he afterwards writes.
 ' At this Sacrament, my Heart was but dull
 ' and

and sluggish, which is my great Trouble ;
 I thought, I took some Pains with my
 hard Heart in my Preparations, yet my
 Endeavours proved ineffectual at this
 Time. God be merciful to me a Sinner,
 for the Heart is deceitful above all things,
 and desperately wicked.

Another Time he writes; ' I did appear
 at the Lord's Table, and receive the ho-
 ly Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*, I hope,
 to the Benefit and Advantage of my pre-
 cious and immortal Soul ; I found much
 Joy and Comfort in the Ordinance, and
 it was very delightful to my Soul. Lord,
 bless and sanctify it to me, and grant, O
 God, that I may ever bear upon my Heart
 those Promises and Resolutions, which I
 make at thy holy Table.

And thus, ' O Lord, I dare not approach
 thy holy Table in my own Strength or
 Merits, but in the Strength and Merits of
 my dear Saviour Jesus Christ ; for I
 know when I have done all that I can,
 to sit and prepare my self for thy Table,
 my Endeavours will be found imperfect ;
 yet I will hope and trust in Thee, my God,
 for thy Help and Assistance, and the free
 Pardon and Forgiveness of all my Sins,
 through the Mediation of my dear Savi-
 our, and this I beg for Jesus sake, and for
 thy Mercy sake. *Amen, Amen.*

And thus ; ' I often call to mind that
 memorable Saying of Mr. *Flavel* ; the
Lord's Supper and the Point of *Death* re-
 quire equal Seriousness ; we should go to
 that Ordinance, as if we were going into

' another World. O what need is there of
 ' an awful composed Spirit, when we ap-
 ' proach the Lord in this Ordinance. O that
 ' I could humble my self at this Time,
 ' and examine my self, and search and try
 ' my Heart and Ways, that I may find out
 ' my Errors, and where my Unfitness lies,
 ' that I may repent and amend; O how un-
 ' suitable is a dry Eye and a hard Heart to
 ' such an Ordinance as this! now would I
 ' free my self from all the Cares of this
 ' World, be in perfect Charity with all,
 ' and be affected in Prayer and Meditation.
 ' The chief Things this vain World affords,
 ' are Honours, Riches, and Pleasures; I de-
 ' sire no greater Honour, than the Love
 ' and Favour of God: no Riches, but an
 ' Interest in the unsearchable Riches of
 ' Christ, and Benefit by him; nor value any
 ' Pleasure like Communion with God;
 ' Lord, grant me these, and I desire no
 ' more.

' Lord, (saith he) I stretch out the weak
 ' Arms of my Faith towards Thee; O stretch
 ' out the mighty Arms of thy Power and
 ' Mercy, and come and save me. I am fear-
 ' ful (saith he) that I am not rightly prepared,
 ' but, I hope, that is an Error on the better
 ' Hand; then are we most fit when we are most
 ' humbled and ashamed in the Sense of our own
 ' Unfitness. I will, by the Grace of God, use
 ' my best Endeavours, acknowledging my
 ' own Insufficiency, the Spirit is willing,
 ' but the Flesh weak; therefore will I beg
 ' of my heavenly Father, that he will di-
 ' rect, assist, and accept of me, through
 ' Christ

‘Christ my Saviour; let this unspeakable Love
‘of Thine, constrain me to Obedience.

Once when he was prevented from this
Ordinance, by an unexpected Throng of
worldly Business, which, he thought, did
for the present unfit him for it, he writes,
‘It was a great Trouble to me, that I lost
‘such an Opportunity; Lord, pardon this
‘great Neglect, this Sin of Omission, and
‘prepare me, by thy Grace, to embrace the
‘next Opportunity.

His Prayer sometimes after receiving was;
‘O most glorious Lord God, let me now
‘sing Praise to thy great Name; for blessed
‘are they that dwell in thy House, and are
‘fed, tho’ it be with the Crumbs that fall
‘from thy Table; and now I have tasted,
‘and seen how good Thou art, and that
‘Thou hast heard my Prayers, and granted
‘my Request; O that I might never depart
‘from Thee, or be weary of thy Service;
‘strengthen me, O Lord, against all man-
‘ner of Sin, that I may say with the
‘princely Prophet, *I have sworn, and I will*
‘*perform it, that I will keep thy righteous Judg-*
‘*ments:* direct me, O Lord, by thy holy
‘Spirit, and carry me thro’ this Vale of
‘Tears, this Vally of the Shadow of Death,
‘for Jesus sake. Amen.

When he receiv’d the *Lord’s Supper* upon
the Account of his Office, he writes, ‘I
doubt there are many who come upon this
‘Occasion, and neglect the Duty at other
‘Times, which is a sad Thing; but let
‘me begin at Home, and not judge other
‘Men; but examine my self.

IX: His Thankfulness to God for the Mercies he had received.

He often expresseth himself much affected with the Goodness of God to him, the Memory of which he abundantly utters. In August 1697 he thus writes: ' This being the 60th Year of my Age, I thank my God, who hath spun out my Days to this Length. I praise the Lord, that he hath made me a reasonable Creature, a Man, and not a Beast, a Christian, and not a Heathen; that he hath planted me in a Protestant Nation, bless'd me with the Light of the Gospel, which I value above all Things. Come, behold the Works of the Lord, what he has done for my Soul! I have a Competency to live upon; tho' it seems but little in the Eyes of some, yet, I bless my God, I think it sufficient, and am therewith very well content. I have enough to keep me while I live, and bury me when I am dead, and that's sufficient. Naked came I into the World, and brought nothing with me, and naked shall I return, and carry nothing away with me.

' If I look back, and review the Mercies of my Life, they are innumerable; I shall only name some: I never was arrested, or imprisoned in all my Life; never had a Joint put out, or a Bone broken; never received any great Hurt or Wound to use a Surgeon; have been long in the Militia, yet never was in one Battle, so peaceable have our Days been. I have had much Dearly in the World, yet never had a Trial in any Court, which has made my Life

' the easier. I never was assaulted by Thieves,
 ' nor had my Pockets pick'd. I have liv'd
 ' in Repute and Credit, and never under any
 ' Disgrace or Scandal, and what false Re-
 ' ports have sometimes been rais'd of me,
 ' never turned much to my Prejudice.
 ' I have had many Creature Comforts, good
 ' Wives, good Children, hopeful Grand-child-
 ' dren, kind Friends, loving Neighbours,
 ' &c. those that are nearest me, pleasing and
 ' comfortable to me, my Lot cast in a fruit-
 ' ful Soil, where the Gospel flourisheth, and
 ' is frequently preached, when many, more
 ' deserving than I am, have liv'd in Po-
 ' verty and Affliction, or have been grieved
 ' with wicked Relations, that have brought
 ' down *their gray Hairs with Sorrow to the*
 ' *Grave*; my Passage through the World has
 ' been very pleasant.

How may this good Man's Thankfulness
 to God, shame those, who, instead of caring
 and working for a Livelihood, and paying
 a great Rent as he did, live at Ease, re-
 ceive great Rent, and deliver all their Care
 and Business upon the Heads and Hands of
 others, and have every thing about them,
 pleasing to a Nicety, and yet seldom think
 of their Obligations to the God of their
 Mercies, or give him Praise for his Favours
 to them.

But see how he was affected with these
 Mercies, ' Lord, (saith he) 'tis owing to thy
 ' Goodness, not to any Desert of mine, that
 ' my Life has been so comfortable. What
 ' shall I render to the Lord for all his Be-
 ' nefits? I will acknowledge his Goodness to

' me, and praise him while I have a Day to
 ' live in this World. O that I could in
 ' some measure walk answerably to the
 ' Goodness of God to me! Lord, Thou
 ' hast given me Abundance of temporal
 ' good Things, give me spiritual Grace,
 ' and I ask no more. Yet he adds, the pre-
 ' sent Pleasantness of my Life, shall never
 ' extinguish in me the Thoughts of Death,
 ' because the one is certain, the other un-
 ' tain.

He often expressed his Thankfulness to
 God for publick Mercies; for Peace, and
 Plenty, and Health in the Nation, especially
 our happy Enjoyment of the Gospel; that
 not only our civil Rights and Liberties, but
 our Religion is secured to us by Law.
 That our Land is not a Seat of War; and
 he writes with great Compassion concerning
 those Countries that are so. ' Sure (saith
 he) ' no Nation under the Sun enjoys more
 ' Mercies than we in England do at this
 ' Time. I am obliged to praise God, not
 ' only for particular Mercies to me and
 ' mine, but for his common Mercies to the
 ' Land wherein we live. Blessed be the
 ' God of Heaven for them; and again, I
 ' say, blessed be his great and holy Name
 ' for evermore. How great is the Patience
 ' and Forbearance of God towards us, tho'
 ' our Sins cry aloud for Vengeance; and we
 ' are very ungrateful for the Mercies we
 ' receive. Some do not like the present Go-
 ' vernment, others grudge at the Taxes,
 ' others are highly offended at the Tolerati-
 ' on, and some are scarce content with any
 ' thing

‘ thing ; not considering the Calamities of
 ‘ other Nations, how barbarously the poor
 ‘ Protestants of *France* have been used by
 ‘ their tyrannical Prince, and what Desola-
 ‘ tions he has made with Fire and Sword in
 ‘ many of his neighbouring Countries, tho’
 ‘ of his own Religion.

X. The Sense he had of his Afflictions.

Undertaking in his old Age to give an
 Account of his Troubles, thus he begins :

‘ My greatest Trouble is for the *Sins that I*
 ‘ *have committed* ; which he took all Occasi-
 ons to reflect upon with godly Sorrow, ab-
 horring himself, groaning under the Bur-
 then of Corruption, longing for Delive-
 rance, and crying to Heaven for Help. His
 Books are full of Passages to this Purpose ;
 wondring at those Fools, that can make a
 Mock at Sin, that plead for it, laugh at
 it, turn it into a Jest, and glory in it, for-
 getting the Nature of God, the Worth of
 their Souls, and the awful Eternity they
 are so near. Though such may have the
 Name of Christians, it is but the Name. O
 what Heart-piercing Thoughts will such
 have of Eternity, shortly and they will be
 themselves astonished to think, how they
 could possibly make so very light of these
 great Things.

His next Trouble was, *Worldly Care and*
Business, ‘ which (saith he) is often a great
 ‘ Hindrance to my Devotion, distracts my
 ‘ Head, disturbs my Mind, and makes me
 ‘ unfit for holy Duties. An affable Tem-
 ‘ per (saith he) hath been injurious to me ;

' I have been always ready to serve my
 ' Neighbour or Friend, in any Business that
 ' I was capable of, whereby I have lost
 ' much Time; but I have therein endea-
 ' voured to do Good, and to shew, that I
 ' love my Neighbour as my self. But I
 ' earnestly desire, that I may desist from
 ' worldly Business one Year or two before
 ' my Death, that I may have the more time
 ' to prepare for it.

His next Trouble was, the *painful Infirmi-
 ties of old Age*: Stone or Gravel in the Kid-
 neys, Sciatica, and the like. ' Though I live
 (saith he) ' with much Content, yet not
 ' without a *Thorn in the Flesh*; scarce a
 ' Night passeth without smarting Pain; it
 ' is God's Goodness that it is not worse;
 ' I have reason to bear it patiently, for it
 ' is less than my Sins have deserved. Tho'
 ' the outward Man grows weaker, I hope,
 ' the inward Man grows stronger; Lord,
 ' cast me not off in the Time of old Age.
 A Book written by Mr. Corbit of *Chichester*,
 when he was grievously afflicted with the
 Stone, was of great Use to him, and he
 collected much out of it; concluding, ' Lord,
 ' put thy Spirit of Grace and Meekness into
 ' my Heart, that I may bear with Patience
 ' whatever Thou art pleased to lay upon
 ' me, and help me to follow this good
 ' Example. I can truly say, my Pains and
 ' Distempers have very much drawn my
 ' Mind off this World. 'Tis good for me
 ' I have been afflicted. He wrote down
 divers Passages of Scripture, to comfort
 himself with under his Pains; *Happy is*
 the

the Man whom God correcteth, for he maketh sore; and bindeth up; whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth; blessed is the Man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest. And many the like.

Being once wonderfully delivered from Hurt by a dangerous Fall from his Horse; his Foot hanging in the Stirrop, so that he had been in all Likelihood kill'd, if his Shoe had not happily come off, he writes thus of it, 'In my Distress, I said, Lord, have Mercy on my Soul, for I see that my Life is gone; my Hope was in God, to whom I cried for Deliverance, and he heard me according to his Word. *Call upon me in the Time of Trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.* God granted me Deliverance, and shall not I now endeavour to glorifie Thee, O Thou Preserver of Men. O let this for ever engage me to keep close to Christ my Refuge, and make me say with *Exra*, since Thou, Lord, hast given me such a Deliverance as this, should I again break thy Commandments? Lord, grant that I may never forget thy Goodness! He failed not to give Thanks to God for the Mercy, upon the yearly Return of the Day.

XI. *His Zeal for the Suppression of Vice and Prophaneness.*

When the Minister of his Parish, and others of his Neighbours, well affected to Religion and Virtue, joined in a Society to promote the Design of Her Majesty's pious Proclamation, *for the preventing and punishing*
of

of Vice, Profaneness, and Immorality, by informing against Offenders, in order to the putting of the Laws in Execution; he was an active Man among them; tho' many opposed this good Work, and reproached them that acted in it, yet he knew, he had the Law of God and the Land on his Side, and was not discouraged in it. This good Design was countenanced and encouraged by the Arch-bishop of *Canterbury's* circular Letter to the Bishops of his Province, dated *April 4, 1699.* The printed Sermons of the Bishops of *Ely, Salisbury, Chester, Chichester, Dr. Stanhop, Dr. Willis, Dr. Kennet,* and other Dignitaries of the Church. The Lord Bishop of *Oxford* thus addresseth himself to these Societies: 'Ye brave and truly heroick Souls, who have entered into a holy Confederacy, not only against Flesh and Blood, but against Principalities and Powers, &c. Your Adversaries are numerous and powerful, the Prince of the Power of the Air, with his Rulers and Companies, and the Children of Disobedience upon Earth, in whom he worketh, all evil Spirits, and all wicked Men, and from these you must expect the most vigorous and obstinate Opposition. But be not afraid of their Terrors, remember that the Battle is not yours but God's, &c. Much to the same Purpose is collected in the Account of the Progress of the Reformation of Manners, the 13th Edition. It is therefore a great Surprize and Grief to all good Men, to find those Societies represented quite otherwise by *Dr. Sacheverell,*

verell, in his Affize Sermon at Derby, Aug. 15, 1709. where he saith, *p* 8. ' That under the sanctified Pretence of Reformation of Manners, they turn Informers, assume an odious and factious Office; arrogantly intrench upon others Christian Liberty and Innocence, and under the Shew of more Zeal and Purity, the most infallible Token of a dextrous and refined Hypocrite and Knave, turn the World upside down. And *p* 10. that ' these troublesome Wasps erect themselves into illegal inquisitions, and whatever godly and fallacious Glosses they may cast upon their Actions, they are doubtless, the unwarrantable Effects of an idle, ineroaching, impertinent, and meddling Curiosity, — the base Product of ill Nature, spiritual Pride, Censoriousness, and sanctified Spleen; petending to carry on the blessed Work of Reformation, by lying, slandering, whispering, back-biting, and tale-bearing, the most express Character of the Devil, who is emphatically stiled, the grand Accuser of the Brethren; no Wonder then that St. Paul hath so severely stigmatized these Busie-bodies in other Mens Matters, by ranking them with *Murderers* and *Thieves*, as the most proper Persons to keep one another Company.

When this good Man was told, he would be accounted a Busie-body for joining to this Society; he said, he valued it not, so that he was doing good, and were honouring God. He gives this Account of it, ' We met about 20 of us at our Minister's House, the last Lords Day in the Month
' after

‘ after Evening Prayer, to consult about carrying on the good Work of the Reformation of Manners in the Parish; and we had pretty good Success, many were restrained from open Profaneness, the poor relieved, but we met with Discouragement from some, who we hoped, would have encouraged us.

Once coming into a publick House, and hearing a Gentleman most profanely swearing, tho’ a Stranger to him, he desired him to forbear; said he, Thou art some *Presbyterian* I warrant thee; said the Lieutenant, pray Sir, what Church are you of? Of the Church of *England*, said he; then said the Lieutenant, I am sorry you are of the same Church that I am of, for you are a Disgrace to it.

‘ I once (saith he) heard a Friend of mine talk Atheist-like, very prophanely,; I reproved him saying, Sir, Why do you talk so wickedly? Do you think there is neither God nor Devil, Heaven nor Hell? He answered, it may be there is such things, but I know not where they are. I answered, Sir, in Time you may know, to your own Sorrow and Amazement. By this Time he doth, for he died lately.

XII. *His Charity, especially for the teaching of poor Children.*

He was very liberal to the Poor, according to his Ability. A worthy Knight giving many of Mr. Gouge’s *Surest and Safest Way of Thriving*: One of them came into his Hand; after he had read it, he wrote down

down his Resolution, which was from that Time forward, to *double his Charity*. He loved to employ poor Workmen, and was kind to them, saying, they worked hard for a little Money.

He wrote down such Passages as these, to stir up himself to Charity ; ' It is not he, that possesseth Wealth, and keeps it by him, that is rich, but he that distributes it in Charity, which will make Men rich for ever. When thou givest to the poor, thou securest to thy self, and what thou withholdest another shall possess. Give to the poor, and it shall be given thee ; It is lent to the Lord ; and God twice repays it ; in this World, by a Blessing on thy Wealth, and in Heaven he repays it over again. Thou shalt have in Grace, what thou partest with in Money.

He contributed very cheerfully to the teaching of poor Children, and bought divers of that little Book call'd, *The Guide to Heaven*, to give away, and had a great Esteem for that Book, generally carried one about him to read at his Leisure. He much rejoiced in the Increase of the *Charity-Schools*, and was pleas'd to see the Children, taught at those Schools, carry themselves reverently at Church, and hear them say their Catechism. When he dy'd, out of his little, he left Ten Pounds to the Charity-School in Woburnbury Parish.

XIII. His Respect to good Ministers, and his Grief concerning those that were otherwise, and his lamenting our unhappy Divisions.

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As he had a Reverence and Love for God, so he had for all his; his Day, his People, his Ordinances, his Ministers: He was, in Judgment and Practice, for the Church of *England*, as by Law established, 'for (saith he) it is my Belief that a Man may, by the Grace of God, live as holy a Life in this Church as in any. He doth in his Books bless God, for the learned and pious Clergy of the Church of *England*; it rejoiced him to hear (a few Days before he dy'd) the present Lord Bishop of *Chester*, preach so excellent a Sermon at *Nantwich*, that had the Marrow and Substance of the Gospel in it, on 1 *Tim.* I. 15. and to hear of that excellent Charge he gave his Clergy, to teach their People, the Necessity of divine Revelation, the divine Authority of the Scripture, the Divinity of our Saviour, and to press Holiness of Life; and that they should set a good Example, and deny themselves in lawful Things for the Good of their People; and refrain publick Houses: And as to those Protestant Dissenters, that carried it humbly and as they ought, they should not be behind hand with them in Love and Kindness. He rejoiced that the Church had many such.

He had a great Value for Mr. *Jenks*, who was Minister of *Wibunbury*, and died July 19, 1700. 'I got much Benefit to my Soul (saith he) 'by his good Preaching and exemplary Living. He was a Man (saith he) 'of a good natural Temper, an ingenious Preacher, sober and temperate, and very charitable, of a publick Spirit; he used
his

his best Endeavours to promote Religion in
 the Parish. I have heard him reprove Sin
 and idle Talk very boldly; he was dili-
 gent in the Duties of a Minister; he was
 a constant Reader of the Prayers, and fre-
 quently administred the *Lord's-Supper*;
 carefully catechiz'd the Children and Ser-
 vants in the Summer-time; visited the
 Sick in all Quarters of his Parish, both
 poor and rich; would go to any Part of
 the Parish to baptize Children that were
 sick, and not fit to be brought to Church;
 took a deal of Pains to get Subscriptions,
 for the maintaining of petty Schools, to
 teach Children to read; he did his utmost
 towards the Suppression of Vice; particu-
 larly the punishing of the filthy Sin of
 Fornication in his Parish; but herein he
 was opposed by some to his great Grief,
 which made him often say, that Christiani-
 ty was come to a very low Ebb among
 us, when Men that profess Christianity,
 hinder the Punishment of Vice and De-
 bauchery. I asked him once to spend his
 two Pence with me; saith he, I never
 went to an Ale-house, on purpose to spend
 two Pence in all my Life. For repairing
 the Vicaridge-house, and improving the
 Glebe, he exceeded most Men, and endea-
 voured all that in him lay, to promote
 all the Concerns of the Church. Mr. Lan-
 caster preached his Funeral Sermon, on
Acts XX. 20. I have taught you publickly,
and from House to House; and gave him
 a very high Character, which he well de-
 served. After the Funeral, Mr. Lancaster
 came

came to Lieutenant *Illidge*, took him by the Hand, and said, You were none of those that grieved your Minister.

‘ In the Time of our Vacancy, (saith he) it was my frequent Prayer to Almighty God, that he would be pleased to send us a Minister that truly feared God and loved Religion. He also took the Boldness in his great Zeal, to write a Letter to my Lord Bishop of *Lichfield* and *Coventry*, who is Patron, beseeching him, for Christ’s sake, the great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls, to provide for this great Parish (being 18 Townships) such a Minister, as may answer the great Charge and Trust he undertakes; one truly religious, laborious, and an able Preacher, that may bring Honour to God and our holy Religion, &c. praying God to direct his Lordship in the Choice. And when his Lordship had presented Mr. *Bromfield*, the present Incumbent, and he had had some Trial of him, he writes, ‘ What great Cause have I to thank and praise the Lord, who hath heard my Prayers, and sent us such a good Minister. Some Time after he wrote to Mr. *Bromfield*, expressing his great Satisfaction in him as his spiritual Guide, and begging his pious Advice and Instruction in his spiritual Concerns; ‘ For it is from your Mouth (saith he) that I receive the good Word of God, and from your Hand, I receive the holy Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, and, according to your Counsel, I purpose to proceed, as God shall enable me. He prayed earnestly for his Minister,

ster, that he might live long to the Glory of God, and might be an Instrument of the Conversion and Salvation of many Souls.

Concerning the Divisions among us, he thus writes; 'I own my self to be a Member of the established Church of *England*, which, I think, is not exceeded by any other in Purity; I was baptized, and have continued in that Communion all my Days; yet have great Charity for Protestant Dissenters, that truly fear God and love Religion; I am much troubled, when I hear such abused, and reproached, and scorned by wicked and profane Wretches, that will swear, and curse, and be drunk, and stick at no manner of Debauchery, and yet boast, that they are Church of *England* Men; God knows, these are a Disgrace to our Church, and a great Scandal to Religion. These are the Men that undermine the Church, and are drawing down Judgments on themselves, and the whole Nation. And some of our high Clergymen will preach against Profaneness in the Pulpit, but allow it, and laugh at it in the Ale-house; and will rather reproach and persecute an honest Dissenter, for truly serving God, than make Complaint of, or endeavour to punish a profane Swearer, a Drunkard, or a debauched Wretch that blasphemes the great God; we have good Laws against Profaneness, but not put in Execution; 'tis as the Prophet *Hosea* saith, *like People, like Priest*. 'I once (saith he) reprov'd a Minister for sitting in idle Company, and bearing a deal of

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' obscene and wicked Talk ; he answered,
 I am not to reprove such Things out of the
 Pulpit. ' So careless and lukewarm in Re-
 ' ligion (saith he) are many of them ; they
 ' live loose Lives themselves, and grow
 ' envious at those, who serve God after a
 ' more serious manner, tho' of their own
 ' Communion, and true Sons of the Church.
 ' Doubtless (saith he) it will be more tole-
 ' rable for *Tyre* and *Sidon* in the Day of
 ' Judgment, than for such Men ; especially
 ' those that persecute and reproach the Ser-
 ' vants of God ; who so offends one of these,
 ' better he were thrown into the Sea with
 ' a Millstone about his Neck. Good Lord,
 ' in Mercy turn the Hearts of these blind
 ' Guides, (so he goes on) who call them-
 ' selves the Ministers of Christ, but disco-
 ' ver the contrary, by their Ambition and
 ' Pride, and seeking Revenge upon their
 ' poor dissenting Brethren, rather promoting
 ' Animosities, than using Means for Peace.
 ' Another Time (saith he) I was in Com-
 ' pany at Dinner, where there were many
 ' that count themselves of the high Church,
 ' and Abundance of Cursing and Swearing
 ' there was among them ; and tho' there
 ' were some Clergy-men at Table, they
 ' shewed no Dislike of it, nor gave one Word
 ' of Reproof to the Swearers. ' I very
 ' much suspect, that such Men are no Mi-
 ' nisters of Christ, who can stand by, and
 ' hear their Master abused, and have nothing
 ' to say on his Behalf. Indeed of late (saith
 ' he) ' there is a Generation of young Clergy-
 ' men among us, who are proud, and idle,
 ' and

and loose, and fitter to go to School, than to the Pulpit.

Let none blame him for his Zeal in this Matter, since he himself knew, by sad Experience, what Influence the ill Examples of the Clergy have upon others; for he remembered with Grief, that above 20 Years ago, when he himself lived a careless Life, he sat up one *Lord's-day* Night, drinking till the next Morning, and two Clergymen were in Company with him all that Time; one that had preached that Day, and the other the Minister of the Parish; towards Morning, when they had drunk the House dry, one of the Ministers gave Money, to knock up another House to get more Drink; when he came Home, his Wife asked him, how he could answer his mispending the Evening of the *Lord's-day* so; he reply'd, he had been with two Ministers, and he did but as they did.

Then when he lived at large himself, he was very severe against the Dissenters; but when he saw the Errors of his Ways, he was troubled for it, and became very moderate towards them; hearing them often reviled by those, who themselves led ill Lives, he set himself to enquire concerning them, acquainted himself with some of them, and look'd into their Books, and found they were not the Men, they were represented to be, but Men worthy to be lov'd; and then, tho' he continued in full and constant Communion with the Church to his dying Day, he was himself reproach'd as a Presbyterian; which very much confir-

med him in his good Opinion of them; for (saith he) our high Church-men will scarce admit of one serious Christian among us; for, if a Man begin to have that Character, he is branded with the Title of a Presbyterian. Certainly they cannot do the Presbyterians a greater Kindness, nor the Church of *England* a greater Diskindness.

It grieved him to hear some make such a Noise against those, whom he knew to be good Christians, calling them Schismaticks, when they themselves who made that Noise, he thought unfit for so great a Charge of Souls, by Reason of their Immoralities, their small Qualifications, or their envious, unchristian, malicious Tempers; he wondered how Men could make so light a Matter of Souls, as by their unnecessary Impositions, to force Men either to a *sinful Compliance*, or (as they call it) a *damnable Schism*. Upon his reading the Conference at the *Savoy*, between the Bishops and the Ministers, commissioned by King *Charles II.* he told his Minister his Judgment was, that the Fault of our Divisions lay at those Bishops Door, who had Power, and might have prevented them.

He pray'd often for the healing of our Divisions, and comforted himself with those Words of the learned Bp. *Stillingfleet*, 'God will one Day convince Men, that the Union of the Church, lies more in the Unity of Faith and Affection, than in Uniformity of doubtful Rites and Ceremonies.

XIV. His *spiritual improving common Occurrences.*

Some of the many occasional good Thoughts, which we meet with in his Papers, we shall set down.

November 1st, 1699. This, I understand, is my Birth-day; I now enter upon my climacterical Year 63, a Year in which it has been observed that many die; I have found in reading Lives, that *Tertulian, St. Bernard, Luther, Melancthon, Justus, Jonas,* and many others, died in that Year of their Lives; Death is a Debt I owe, and must pay ere long, whenèver the great God demands it; Lord, I am willing to submit to thy holy Will; do with me what Thou pleasest; my Time is short, my Work is great, my Strength is small; Lord, help me to improve that short Minute of Time which yet remains.

I have lately set my House in Order, and, I hope, have made an honest and equal Distribution of that worldly Estate, my good God hath given me, endeavouring in all Things to die with a good Conscience, which will be comfortable in a dying Hour.

I have now past one Month of the doubtful Year, and am so much nearer my End; I endeavour to stand upon my Guard, and to watch, because I am uncertain when my Lord cometh.

At the latter End of the following Summer, he writes; 'Now the Days begin to shorten, an Emblem of my Estate; my Days decline; Winter and Death are coming.

ing on ; wise Men provide for both.
 Most Men take care of their Bodies and
 earthly Concerns ; but most wise and happy
 is that Man, that takes due Care of his Soul,
 and his eternal Concerns ; that in Health
 prepares for Sicknes and Death.

At the Return of the Year he writes : ' I
 have now out-liv'd the doubtful Year ;
 and I praise God, have meditated more of
 Death this Year than formerly ; and, I
 hope, shall continue to do so all the Days
 of my Life. Death will come, and that
 ere long ; the young may die, but the old
 must die. A Friend of mine, not long
 since, said rejoicingly, now I have out-liv'd
 my climacterical Year, I hope I may live
 a great while ; but he dy'd the Year fol-
 lowing : ' And I know Death hath the same
 Power over me this Year, that he had the
 last, only waits for a Commission from
 him, in whose Hand are all Mens Lives ;
 nay, I cannot assure my self of one Day,
 so uncertain is Life, and the Day of the
 Lord comes, as a Thief in the Night ; I
 hope, I shall never live out of the Expe-
 ctation of Death, while I continue on
 Earth. Lord, help me to watch and pray,
 my Glass is still running, my Dissolution
 draws near ; but the Time is uncertain,
 therefore I must wait the Lord's Leisure,
 whose Creature I am, and to whom I owe
 all possible Obedience, his Time is the
 best Time.

When he enter'd upon his 70th Year, he
 writes ; ' I may very well expect Death
 may seize me before this Year be ended ;
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I find great Decays in my self of late, so that the Time of my Dissolution must of Necessity draw near; should I out-live this Year, and God should add more Days and Years to my Life, I am sensible they would be but Labour and Sorrow, as *Moses* speaks; but I will refer all to my merciful Father, and resign my self wholly to his Will and Pleasure. It is high Time to bestir my self; for the Day is far spent, and the Night is coming, when I must work no more. I am now arrived near the End of my Journey. I have almost done with the World, and the World with me; I have hitherto passed without any signal Troubles, and if now in the Close of my Days, God gently lays his afflicting Hand upon me, I have no Reason to complain, but must own it is what I have deserved, and it is good for me, that I have been afflicted; no Man more miserable than he that has no Adversity.

Such a Time there was great Cock-fighting and Horse-races about the Town, but I saw none of them, having a more serious Concern in Hand, to prepare for my great Change; what will all the Pleasures and Gains of this World avail us, when we come to lie upon a Death-bed?

When he had compleated his 70th Year. Lord (saith he) make me wise to Salvation; teach me so to number the few Minutes of my Time that yet remain, that they may be spent to thy Glory, and the Benefit of my own immortal Soul. I have lived much longer than ever I expected; Lord,

‘ as Thou hast given me Length of Days,
 ‘ with much Comfort and Contentment;
 ‘ grant me the Joys and Comforts of thine
 ‘ everlasting Kingdom, for Christ’s sake.

‘ *January* 1st. Lord, as Thou hast given
 ‘ me Life and Health to enter upon a new
 ‘ Year; so, I pray Thee, give me a new
 ‘ Heart, renew a right Spirit within me;
 ‘ order all my Affections according to thy
 ‘ Will, that I may love what Thou lovest,
 ‘ and hate what Thou hatest; that I may
 ‘ abominate all my old Sins, and may be-
 ‘ come a new Creature in Jesus Christ;
 ‘ that I may spend the ensuing Year to thy
 ‘ Glory and the Good of my own Soul; one
 ‘ Year passeth away, and another comes,
 ‘ and still I am nearer the Time of my Dis-
 ‘ solution; as the old Year is expired,
 ‘ Lord, grant that all my Sins may expire;
 ‘ as the new Year is begun, Lord, give me
 ‘ a new Heart, and new and earnest De-
 ‘ sires to persevere in Godliness all the Days
 ‘ of my Life.

‘ Old Mr. *Henry* desired, that if it were
 ‘ the Will of God, he might live no long-
 ‘ er than he was useful; and my Desire is,
 ‘ that I may not live so long as to be trouble-
 ‘ some.

‘ Now Autumn is come; the Days grow
 ‘ short, so doth my Life; it declines every
 ‘ Day, and is near expiring. It is the
 ‘ greatest Wisdom in Time of Health and
 ‘ Strength, to prepare for Sickneſs and
 ‘ Death; he that really doth so, his Busi-
 ‘ ness of dying is half done. A diseased
 ‘ pained

' pained Body will unfit the Mind for holy
 ' Duties; therefore 'tis good to labour in
 ' Health, and make our Peace with God
 ' then Gray Hairs tell us, as the golden
 ' Leaves on the Trees in Autumn, that our
 ' Fall is near; and it is highly dangerous
 ' to defer our Repentance to the last: Ma-
 ' ny on their Death-bed are sorely handled;
 ' some seized in their Heads, and render'd
 ' insensible; and how can the great Work
 ' be done then? but a virtuous Life never
 ' thought ill of Death: A good Conscience
 ' and a well-grounded Hope of Salvation,
 ' will encourage a dying Man; yet good
 ' Men may be oppress'd with Doubts and
 ' Fears upon a Death-bed, and go to Hea-
 ' ven even by Hell Gates.

One Year he writes; ' There is a great
 ' Shew of a plentiful Crop this Year, which
 ' yet, our God, if he pleaseth, can deprive
 ' us of: The famous Mr. Hooker (as I have
 ' read in his Life) when he was offer-
 ' ed a Benefice in *London*, desired rather to
 ' have a Country Parsonage, where he
 ' might see the Blessings of God spring out
 ' of the Earth. And a pleasant Thing it
 ' is to see the Fruits of the Earth spring up,
 ' grow, and a little Time come to Maturity:
 ' O that we may not set our Hearts too much
 ' upon those Things, so as to neglect the
 ' main Business.

Another Year he writes; ' We have had
 ' a plentiful Crop, and good Harvest Wea-
 ' ther; what shall we render to the Lord
 ' for his Mercies? Lord, with these, give
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‘ us thy Grace, and Peace, and Truth, in
‘ our Days.

He records an awakening Providence,
which fell out to his great Grief; ‘ This
‘ Day a dear Friend of mine was suddenly
‘ kill’d by a Fall from his Horse; he was
‘ well, and dead in a Moment. O how un-
‘ certain (saith he, on this Occasion) is the
‘ Life of Man; Lord, imprint this upon
‘ my Heart, that I may bear it in Mind
‘ while I have a Day to live, and may watch
‘ and pray, because I know not at what
‘ Hour my Lord comes. O that I may
‘ from henceforward, be more diligent than
‘ ever in making Preparation for Death,
‘ that whether it be natural or violent,
‘ sudden or slow, it may be happy.

About the same Time, a young Man
wickedly set himself to drink Brandy to
that Excess, that he died upon the Spot; a
Self-murderer: And another lusty young
Man, suddenly fell down dead in his Ma-
ster’s Shop, and never spoke a Word more;
these three sad Accidents happen’d in and
about *Nantwich*, in less than three Weeks
Time; on which he writes: ‘ How foolish
‘ are they that set their Hearts upon this
‘ World, which we are to look upon as an
‘ Enemy, that will flatter us with its Plea-
‘ sures, but will deceive us, will kiss and
‘ kill. We have heard of many that have
‘ spent their Time very ill, yet at their
‘ Death, have had their Eyes open’d, and
‘ their Consciences awaken’d; one crying
‘ out, *Call Time again!* Another, *Alas! My*
‘ *Life is done, and my Work is undone!* Ano-
‘ ther,

‘ther, O that God would try me once again ! O that Men were of the same Mind now, that they will be of then ! And do that which they will wish they had done, when it’s too late !

‘Such a Time Mr. Bromfield preached excellently of Repentance, and the Danger of delaying it ; at the Funeral of a young Man, struck dead with Lightning in a Moment, in his full Strength. It was indeed a Thunder-clap for Warning to us all that are left behind, to watch always ; for who knows what a Day, what an Hour, what a Minute may bring forth.

‘Though Death doth not come suddenly to all, yet it comes unexpected to many, and unwelcome to most : But as Archbishop Tillotson saith of Mr. Gouge’s sudden Death ; To him no Death could be sudden ; because the constant Employment of his Life, was the best Preparation for Death ; so that it was rather a Favour and Blessing, the more sudden, the more easy.

‘Such a Day, my Mother in Law died (in 1708.) the only Person, save one, that has died in my Family of 36 Years ; and now it has pleased God by Death to make a Breach in my Family, how it may proceed, the only wise God knows, who doth all Things well, to whom I humbly submit my self, trusting in him, that he will give me Strength and Patience, to bear whatever he is pleased to inflict upon me,

me, living or dying, for he is my merciful Father.

O let me not lose one Moment of this precious Time, let me not waste it in idle Trifles and Folly; but employ every Moment of it in doing that Work, which my Father hath sent me to do; If I do this, my Time, how short soever, will be long enough; but if I squander it away in doing nothing, or nothing to the Purpose, I shall find the Want of it, when it is too late.

As he thus improved the Occurrences of his own Time, so he delighted very much in reading Church-History, especially the Lives of good Men, both Ancients and Moderns, and made large Collections out of them: It is my Delight to read the Lives of good Men, and my earnest Desire to imitate their good Examples; the Lord enable me so to do.

He read with much Affection, the Lives of the Martyrs, admiring what they suffered for their dear Lord and Master; Methinks, (saith he) I that have lived to a sufficient Age, (then near 62) should embrace a natural Death willingly, when so many, in the midst of their Days, have with great Joy and Satisfaction, suffer'd cruel and violent Deaths, and have declar'd, they would rather die than live: A well-grounded Hope of Salvation will make a Death-bed easy. He gathered many Things that were very helpful to him, out of Life of Mr. Philip Henry.

Having collected many excellent Passages out of Mr. Burghal's Book, called, *The perfect Way to die in Peace*; he adds, 'I knew Mr. Burghal of *Aston* very well; he was a serious godly Divine, was cast out of his Living at *Aston* on black Bartholomew Day 1662. among a great Number of his pious Brethren all *England* over, the more was the Pity; I have heard him preach often, once in *Nantwich* Church, a Soul-searching Sermon, that did much affect me.

XV. His Desire of retiring from the Hurry of worldly Business.

When he grew near 70 Years of Age, he grew very weary of the Hurry of the World. It has been my Desire (saith he) several Years, to desist from Business, and retire into Privacy, that I might give my self wholly to the great Work of preparing for the World that is to come. I have often wished, and am still of the same Mind, that I were in some private Place, where I knew none, and none knew me, provided it were a Place where Piety was practised. I would fain make an End with the World, before Death thrusts me out of it.

He had designed it several Years before, but it was not till little more than a Year before his Death, that he removed from his Dwelling in the Country, into the Town of *Nantwich*, that he might be free from the Encumbrance of the World, which he found had been a Hindrance to him in his Soul-Concerns, and that he might be near the

the Church. He was sensible, the Town had more Temptations of another kind, which had formerly been sometimes too hard for him; but he put his Trust in the Grace of God, to deliver him from them, and armed himself with these Considerations; 'If I should now relapse, and return with the Dog to his Vomit, how miserable would my Condition be? I should account my self a Cast-away, and undone to all Eternity; and it had been better, I had never known the Way of Righteousness; *If any Man draw back, my Soul shall have no Pleasure in him. The Backslider in Heart shall be filled with his own Ways.* I must daily watch and pray, lest I enter into Temptation. And happy they, whose last Days are their best Days, and their last good Works *more* than the first.

He reserv'd but very little to maintain himself, but said; 'I have enough of this World, and as much as I desire. And now, I hope not to remove again, till I am removed by Death; which, I suppose, will be in a very short Time. Lord, thy Will be done in all Things, whether Life or Death.

Some Time after his Removal into the Town, he wrote thus; 'I praise the Lord, I find much Comfort and Satisfaction in my late Removal; I am quit from a great deal of worldly Care and Trouble, which I have been a long Time cumber'd with; Often (my Soul) since I am retir'd into Privacy, according to my Desire, let me strive and endeavour all that in me lies, to
make

' make the best Use of it; that I may more
' and more contemn the Things of this
' vain World, and set my Affections on
' Things above.

Yet still he found his true Rest was not
in this World; All our Removes, while we
are on this Side *Canaan*, are but from one
Wilderness to another. It is in the future
State, not in this, that there is a true and
everlasting Rest, remaining for the People of
God.

XVI. His *Advice to his Grand-Children.*

He directs one of his little Books to his
three Grand-Daughters: ' My Blessing (saith
' he) I freely give you, and my earnest
' Prayers are to Almighty God, that he will
' bestow his Blessing and Grace upon you,
' that you may live holy and die happy;
' this is the earnest Desire of your poor
' aged Grand-Father. I am not capable to
' give you that Advice that I fain would;
' however, I will do my best, and hope
' you will all take Notice of it, and observe
' it, when I lie rotting in the Dust.

' In the first Place, and above all Things,
' serve the Lord in Spirit and in Truth; love
' him with all your Heart; count all Things
' here below of no Value, in Comparison of
' God and Christ; be careful to keep God's ho-
' ly Laws and Commandments; be frequent in
' Prayer, and hearing the Word. He that will
' taste the Love of God, must be no Stranger
' to Meditation and Prayer; and must not
' be cold or inconstant in them; but dwell
' and walk above with God; he must be
' wholly

' wholly addicted to improve the Talent
 ' he is entrusted with. His Design and
 ' Trade on Earth must be to do all the
 ' Good he can, and to keep his Soul clean
 ' from the Flesh and worldly Vanities, and
 ' to such a Soul, God will make known
 ' his Love. Good Children, I entreat you
 ' again and again to serve God, and then he
 ' will bless you; live religious Lives, you
 ' will be happy here and hereafter. Re-
 ' member your Creator in the Days of
 ' your Youth, for Godliness is great Gain,
 ' as you sow, you will be sure to reap.
 ' Think not to do ill, and hope well. I love
 ' both your Bodies and Souls, and would
 ' have you do well for both, by living in
 ' the Fear of God.

Have a special Care of your Reputation;
 ' 'tis better than precious Ointment, and
 ' rather to be chosen than great Riches;
 ' remember the Verse you learn'd,

*Thy Credit wary keep, it's quickly gone,
 By many Actions got, but lost by one.*

' The Way to get and keep a good Name,
 ' is to live in the Fear of God; to be mo-
 ' dest, and chaste, and virtuous, which will
 ' please your God, rejoice your Friends,
 ' and turn to your own Comfort. I charge
 ' you all, in the Name of God, to take
 ' heed of the Society of vain, loose, young
 ' Fellows; let not such come into your
 ' Company, nor scarce into your Sight, or
 ' Thoughts; but flee from them, as from
 ' a Lion or a Bear.

' Ear.

' Earnestly implore divine Grace to guide,
 counsel, and establish you; for without
 that we can do nothing. Remember God's
 Eye is ever and every where upon you.
 Endeavour to live in godly Families, dwell
 where God dwells, and be in such Compa-
 ny, as you hope to be with in Heaven;
 then at Death, you will only change your
 Place, not your Company. As Death
 leaves us, Judgment will find us: Nothing
 flies so swiftly, as the Soul out of the Bo-
 dy. Eternity hangs on a Moment, for
 such is our Life. Ask your Hearts every
 Night, what you have done this Day; be-
 cause any Night may be your last; work
 and pray, believe, repent, get Assurance
 of Heaven, and be happy for ever. Earth-
 ly Comforts are short-liv'd, Riches have
 Wings, Beauty but Skin deep: All is but
 Vanity. A frothy Wit and a vicious Life
 will carry directly to Atheism, which is
 the Master-mischief of this Age. Thoughts
 are not free, nor Words kind, they will
 both judge us another Day. Get ready
 for Death, it's a great Word to say upon
 good Grounds, I dare die; redeem Time,
 for how cutting will the Remembrance
 of good Hours ill spent be!

' Be obedient, loving and dutiful to your
 Father, take his Advice in all your Con-
 cerns, both spiritual and temporal. O
 that you would all of you be as great a
 Comfort to your Father, as he has been
 to me. He is now above 40 Years of
 Age, and I can truly say, he never vex'd
 or griev'd me in all his Life, but ~~that al-~~
 ways

ways dutiful, loving, and obedient to me; I must own it, that he hath been a great Assistance to me in my spiritual Warfare: Be sure that you all strive to rejoice and comfort your Father's Heart, as he hath rejoiced and comforted mine.

As to your Mother, you had but little Knowledge of her; it pleas'd God to take her out of a troublesome World, when you were but Infants; she was a pious, modest, good Woman; I pray God you may be like her, and that her Virtues may, by the Grace of God, be stamped upon all your Hearts; she was a Pattern of Piety and Patience; from a Child she was discreet and serious, not in the least given to Pride or Vanity; in disposing of her self, she took the Advice of her pious and judicious Parents; she was of a solid, serious Disposition, and mighty cautious what company she entertained, or came into.

Good Children, as you tender your own Good, or expect the Blessing of God, and Comfort here, and eternal Happiness hereafter, do not slight or despise the Advice or Counsel of a poor, dying Grand-father; tho' I yet live, it cannot be long, this being the 67th Year of my Age, therefore I am daily expecting and preparing for my great Change, which you may observe, if you will take the Pains to read over the following weak Meditations; and as I wrote them for my private Use, I desire they may not be expos'd to the Scorn of ill People.

Dear Children, I shall conclude my weak Advice, with some few profitable Texts of Scripture, *Rom. VIII. 13. If ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die : but if ye through the Spirit mortify the Deeds of the Body, ye shall live. Heb. XIII. 16. To do Good, and to communicate, forget not. Psal. L. 22. Now consider this, ye that forget God. Deut. XXXII. 29. O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter End.*

Now the God of all Mercy, Power, and Love, bless you all, and keep you in his true Faith and Fear; in the Knowledge of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ, for evermore. *Amen.*

XVII. His Expectation of, and Preparation for Death.

This was indeed the chief Subject of the Papers he wrote; one might collect a little Volume of his serious Thoughts about Death, and the Passages he wrote referring to this. It was the Sense he had of Death approaching, that put him upon all this Concern about his Soul, and he had the Comfort of it in his dying Hours.

'Sept. 6. 1698. It is my serious Thought, and my Heart's Desire, to note down or compose something in way of Preparation, for my approaching Dissolution. I am now above 60. my Head hoary, my Eyes dim, my Strength fails, the Chips fly off, and the Tree must fall: It is great Wisdom in all to prepare for Death, especially the aged; the young *may*, the old *must* die; 'tis an unwelcome Messenger to most Men.

'But

But 'tis great Folly to strive against such a Stream, and neglect a Work that must be done. Death is most certain, and nothing more necessary than a due caring for the Soul, and a serious Preparation for the Hour of Death and the Day of Judgment, which is my real Purpose. Good Lord, for thy Mercy's sake, direct and assist me in this most great and necessary Work, by thy holy Spirit, that I may persevere in this my Duty, all the Days of my Life, till my Change come.

'To this End it is my Design, to collect some Texts of Scripture that treat of Death and Judgment; also the Sayings of some good Men, and my own weak Sentiments adapted to my own Condition. *If I regard Iniquity in my Heart, the Lord will not hear my Prayers: Cast me not off in the Time of old Age. Be not far from me, O my God, make haste to help me. Now when I am Old and Gray-headed, forsake me not. Whom have I in Heaven but thee. Job. XIV. 14. If a Man die, shall he live again, &c? Rev. XIII. 14. Blessed are the Dead that die in the Lord, &c. Psal. LXXXIX. 48. What Man is he that lives, and shall not see Death? Gen. III. 9. Dust thou art, and to Dust thou shalt return. Isa. XL. 6. All Flesh is Grass. Jam. IV. 14. What is your Life, but a Vapour. Psal. XXXIX. 5. Every Man at his best Estate is Vanity. Matth. XXIV. 44. Watch therefore. Few Days and full of Trouble. Lord, make me to know my End. Heb. IX. 27. After Death, the Judgment. Eccles. XII. 14. God shall bring every Work into Judgment, 2 Cor. V.*

10. *We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ.*

‘ It has been my earnest Desire and Endeavour to leave Sin, before it leave me. Who will not arm himself against an Enemy, that threatens every Hour? Our Breath is in the Hand of God; we may be well one Moment, and dead the next. Many have gone well to Bed; and been dead before Morning. The Time when, the Place where, the Manner how, are all uncertain. Many are taken away, not only in the midst of their Days, but in the midst of their Sins. It is my earnest Desire to make my Peace with God in Time of Health, that I may not have Oil to buy, when I should burn it. It’s dangerous deferring Repentance, that makes a Death-bed uneasy, and dying Hours uncomfortable.

‘ Mr. George Herbert on his Death-bed said, I am sorry, I have nothing to present to my merciful God, but Sin and Misery: But the first is pardoned, and a few Hours will put a Period to the latter.

‘ He that lives well, cannot die ill; but he that lives without Fear, shall die without Hope; he that hath no Grace in his Life, can have no true Peace in his Death. The longest Day has its Night, and the longest Life has its Death; that Man’s Soul is in no good Case, that’s loth to think of dying.

‘ When Death calls, I believe, I shall be as willing to go, as Flesh and Blood will allow; for I am willing to part with every

very

‘ very Thing in this World. I desire to
 ‘ live in continual Expectation of Death;
 ‘ for that will make a Man more careful to
 ‘ serve God, and will make a pious Life
 ‘ the more pleasant; it will check inordi-
 ‘ nate Desires of the World, and it is our
 ‘ Saviour’s express Command, that we watch
 ‘ *always*.

‘ ‘Tis a serious Thing to die; ‘tis a Work
 ‘ by it self. A dying Friend once said to
 ‘ me, *It’s a hard Thing to die*. ‘Twas the
 ‘ Saying of one; if thy Youth has been
 ‘ faulty, ‘tis a Comfort if thy Age be o-
 ‘ therwise; ‘tis bad to be wicked, but worse
 ‘ to continue so.

‘ What Thoughts hast thou of thy dying
 ‘ Hour, and thy departing Soul, it must
 ‘ ‘erelong be required of Thee; will Christ
 ‘ receive it? Hast thou made sure of that?
 ‘ If not, thou hast done nothing, but art
 ‘ undone to all Eternity! If Life be of such
 ‘ Value, as we think it is, what are our
 ‘ Souls worth? but we are earnest in pursuing
 ‘ Shadows, and let go the Substance; we
 ‘ busie our selves about Trifles, and neglect
 ‘ the most weighty Matters.

‘ July 15th, 1700. I desire, it may be my
 ‘ daily Practice while I live, and am capa-
 ‘ ble, to meditate something of Death, and
 ‘ of my dying Hours. Mr. B. in his Trea-
 ‘ tise of *Self-denial*, gives many Reasons, why
 ‘ we should submit to Death, and be willing
 ‘ to die. Our Lives are not our own, but
 ‘ his that doth require them, and he is Lord
 ‘ of them. The greatest Potentates must un-
 ‘ dergo the Stroke of Death: All Things in
 ‘ Hea-

Heaven and Earth are at God's Disposal :
 He gives and takes Life at Pleasure : How
 many Beasts, Birds, and Fishes die, to feed
 us ! The best Saints have trodden this Path
 before us : Our Lord Jesus drunk of this
 bitter Cup, to conquer Death and unsting
 it for us : The best may be afraid, but
 Death puts an End to all their Fears ; 'tis
 Joy when it is over : We should be willing
 to leave this wicked World, to go to the
 glorious Society above. One would think
 these Considerations sufficient, to make any
 Christian willing to part with Life freely.

And afterwards he writes ; ' It is the
 greatest Wisdom in Time of Health and
 Strength, to prepare for Sickness and
 Death ; he that really doth so, his dying
 Work is half done. I ought to do so
 more especially now : for my Parents
 both died before my Age ; I had Three
 Brothers, and all dead. And this is my
 climacterical Year. I desire, that Thoughts
 of Death may fill me daily, that I may
 make it familiar to me.

— One saith ; ' O foolish Soul, I wish
 thou wert as covetous after Eternity, as
 thou art after a fading, perishing Life ;
 and after the blessed Presence of God, as
 thou art for Continuance with Earth and
 Sin. Did we but love God, as strongly as
 the Worldling doth his Wealth, or the
 ambitious Man his Honours, we should
 not be so loth to leave the World, and go
 to God. Turn thy Thoughts from the
 Vanities of this World, set thy self to
 study Eternity, and busie thy self about
 ' the

‘ the Life to come; labour to get your
 ‘ Hearts into Heaven, and doubtless your
 ‘ selves will follow after shortly.

—— ‘ I have here no abiding City, let
 ‘ me not set my Affections on the Things
 ‘ of this World; let me often consider,
 ‘ that this poor Body of mine, shall become
 ‘ as noisom as the vilest Carrion, must be
 ‘ laid in the Earth, and become a Prey
 ‘ to Worms; but my Soul shall still live to
 ‘ all Eternity. Death hath no Power over
 ‘ that immortal Part; I praise the Lord
 ‘ and it doth rejoice my Heart, that I have
 ‘ of late fallen into this Method, of consid-
 ‘ dering and meditating much on my latter
 ‘ End.

—— ‘ I often see younger and stronger
 ‘ than I, go before me; yet it must be my
 ‘ Lot to ere long; Forbearance is no Acquie-
 ‘ sance; Death will not be put off or
 ‘ brib’d.

—— ‘ It is the greatest Concern of Life
 ‘ to prepare for Death; but alas! it is too
 ‘ much neglected by the most of Men, who
 ‘ put the evil Day far off, and promise
 ‘ themselves long Life, when they know not
 ‘ what a Day may bring forth; they that
 ‘ will not remember Death, Death will be
 ‘ sure to remember them; and they that
 ‘ put off the Thoughts of Death, will cer-
 ‘ tainly be surprized at last, and seized un-
 ‘ awares, to their everlasting Amazement.
 ‘ O deceitful Hopes! How many have you
 ‘ deluded? And while you promise Men
 ‘ old Age, you have cut them off in their
 ‘ Youth: Then all the Treasures, Pleasures,
 ‘ and

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and Honours of the World will avail no-
thing; then to have the Favour of God,
an Interest in Christ, and a good Consci-
ence, are the Things that will stand us
in stead, and make a Death-bed easie.
Good Lord, in Mercy help me, that I may
not only write these good Things in my
Book, but may practise them.

— 'I doubt too many never think of
dying, till their dying Day comes; and
then, what would they give to escape it?
Then, what Promises of new Obedience,
which yet prove abortive, like *Pharaoh's*?
Many are like Seamen, they never seek
God for Help, as long as they are able to
help themselves. O my Soul remember
Death, remember that Eternity, which
thou may st begin to Day, or to Morrow,
but never end.

— One saith: 'I must be at God's Dis-
pose, whether I will or no; there is no
Rest for Souls, but in the Will of God;
our own Wills have undone us, they have
mis-governed us, they are our greatest E-
nemies, our Disease, our Prison, our
Death, till they are brought over to the
Will of God; there is no true Peace or
Felicity, but in the Conformity of our
Wills to the Will of God.

— 'To prepare for my great Change, is
my chief Concern in this World; 'tis an
important Business of a high Nature, it is
the Concern of my Soul, which is of
more Value than all the World. Mr.
Bower has many excellent Sayings suited to
my present Purpose: 'The Life of Man is

' short and fleeting; our Days on Earth, few
 ' and uncertain; how careful then should I
 ' be, to manage every Hour well? All the
 ' Time that is past, is irrecoverable, and the
 ' little that remains, flies apace: How
 ' quickly will it be gone, how suddenly
 ' may an unexpected Stroke of Death con-
 ' clude it? And this is all the Opportunity
 ' I have, of making my Peace with God,
 ' and preparing for an everlasting World.
 ' I can have no Business of greater Moment,
 ' than to secure the Happiness of my Soul
 ' in another World; what will all other
 ' Business signify in the End, if this be neg-
 ' lected? But how have I trifled away my
 ' precious Time in Sloth and Idleness,
 ' in foolish Mirth and hurtful Company,
 ' in vain Thoughts and impertinent Dis-
 ' courses? Lord, make these Meditations
 ' effectual, to prevent my Loss of Time
 ' for the future, which, sooner or later,
 ' will be esteemed precious. O how swift,
 ' how short is my Time of Trial, in order
 ' to Eternity? How difficult, how import-
 ' ant a Work is it, to prepare for an ever-
 ' lasting State? What is all this World,
 ' how little, what a meer nothing, to a de-
 ' parting Soul? And shall I continue to
 ' pursue Shadows, and please my self with
 ' empty Dreams, being so near my final
 ' Judgment.

' Let me therefore endeavour to impress
 ' the Consideration of Death and Eternity, as
 ' at Hand, more deeply on my Heart; that
 ' I may walk and live, may discourse and
 ' pray, and demean my self in every Thing,

as near an unchangeable State! my Time is near an End, I must shortly take Death by the cold Hand, Lord, direct and assist me in this great Concern.

— ‘Remember this (O Man) that *Dust thou art, and to Dust thou shalt return*; this is a mourning Verse, which God himself delivered to *Adam*; thou art but a Bubble, thy Life as the passing of a Shadow; why dost thou heap up Riches, O thou covetous Wretch, whenas this Night thy Wealth may be taken from thee, or thou from it!

— ‘I praise God, the Thoughts of Death are often in my Mind, and my great Change still before mine Eyes; my Time is short, my Days that remain are but few; yet I fear, I do not make that Preparation for Death that I ought. In me, that is, in my Flesh there dwells no good Thing. To will is present, but how to perform that which is good, I know not.

— ‘I may well expect the Summons of Death every Day; the most earnest Business I can set about, is to prepare for it, and in order to that, to consider often how it will be with me, when I lie gasping and groaning upon my Death-bed.

— ‘Therefore I often think of Death, because it is my earnest Desire that when it comes, it may not be terrible to me. Death hath some Terror in it, therefore I would learn how not to fear it; the way never to fear Death, is always to think of it.

‘ To meditate on Mortality is necessary for
 ‘ all, especially the aged ; our Glas is al-
 ‘ ways running, and now almost run out ;
 ‘ our Time always going, and now almost
 ‘ gone ; we have one Foot in the Grave ;
 ‘ Death stands daily over our Heads, ready
 ‘ to strike ; I ought therefore to say, this Day
 ‘ I stand at the Door of Eternity, because
 ‘ we die daily, still think of thine Hour-
 ‘ glafs.

—— ‘ I often think of Death, but can-
 ‘ not live up to what those Thoughts re-
 ‘ quire, as I would and should ; nor perform
 ‘ my Duty to God with such Life and
 ‘ Zeal as I ought. ‘ O my Soul, think what
 ‘ will all the World avail a dying Man !
 ‘ The Peace with God, and Peace of Con-
 ‘ science, are of more Value than all the
 ‘ World.

—— The learned *Salmasius* said upon his
 Death-bed ; ‘ O ! I have lost a World of
 ‘ Time ; Time, that most precious Thing
 ‘ in the World, whereof had I but one
 ‘ Year more, it should be spent in *David’s*
 ‘ Psalms, and *Paul’s* Epistles : O Sirs ! mind
 ‘ the World less, and God more. The Fear
 ‘ of God is true Wisdom.

—— ‘ I see or hear every Day of the
 ‘ Death of one or other, younger than my
 ‘ self, they go to the Grave before me ; I
 ‘ survive, but am in Expectation : I know
 ‘ the Lot will fall on me whenever it pleas-
 ‘ eth God, I hope, I shall with Meekness
 ‘ and Patience, submit to the Will of my
 ‘ heavenly Father, and freely resign my Soul
 ‘ to him that gave it.

--- One

— One faith; 'To thee, O my Saviour, I commit my Soul; it is thy own by Redemption, thy own by Covenant, seal'd by thy Spirit; thou hast promised not to lose it, hast promised Rest to weary Souls; Lord, I am not only weary of Suffering, but weary of Sin, weary of the Flesh, weary of my Darkness, Dulness, Distance, weary of this wicked, blind, unrighteous World; and whither should I look for Rest, but homewards to my heavenly Father. 'To Thee I am but a bruised Reed, but Thou wilt not break me; I am but smoking Flax, but Thou wilt not quench what thy Grace has kindled.

— 'O let me not be surprized and think it strange, when Death seizeth me, and throws me upon a sick and dying Bed; then let me submit to my Father's good Pleasure, and resign my self up to him. I have fair Warning given me by the Death of others, Day after Day, Time after Time, to prepare for my great Change; Lord, direct and assist me in this great Concern. I have here no abiding City, and therefore seek one to come; for how can I be in love with this World, which is so vain, sinful, and uncertain?

— 'Have not we seen and known some, that have been suddenly struck, sound and sick, quick and dead, in the Space of one Hour and less; how dare we then defer our Repentance? Death may seize us in our Delays, and deliver us up into Eternity. Lord, grant that every

' Day I may remember my last Day, may
 ' every Day take a Turn or two with Death,
 ' so shall I be acquainted with its Fare, and
 ' not feel its Sting. To trust to a Death-
 ' bed Repentance, is a very high Affront to
 ' Almighty God: What do those make of
 ' him, who think to live in Sin all their
 ' Days, and then expect Pardon when they
 ' can sin no longer !

— Dr. *Taylor* saith ; ' We complain our
 ' Life is short, yet we throw away much of
 ' it ; we want Company, seek out Arts to
 ' drive the Time away, and then weep, be-
 ' cause the Time is gone too soon ; he that
 ' desires to die well, must not live a soft,
 ' voluptuous Life.

— ' An idle Man is never ready to die,
 ' and is glad of any Excuse ; a busie Man
 ' hath always something unfinish'd, and is
 ' ready for every Thing, but Death: But re-
 ' member, thou must carry no more out of
 ' the World, than thou broughtest in ; there-
 ' fore be satisfied with a little, thou must
 ' be gone shortly, Eternity is always at
 ' Hand.

— ' I often resolve to observe these
 ' good Instructions which I read and write,
 ' but am too often disappointed, and taken
 ' off by worldly Business ; such are my pre-
 ' sent Concerns, being born to no Estate,
 ' that I must pay my Rent, and make ne-
 ' cessary Provision for my Family, and
 ' this will not be done without Care and
 ' Pains in worldly Business ; yet I count all
 ' Things here below but Dross and Dung,

‘ in Comparison with God and Christ; there
 ‘ I desire to set my Heart and Affection.

— One saith; ‘ The raising up of the
 ‘ Soul to God, is indeed the greatest Work,
 ‘ but the mortifying of the Flesh, and de-
 ‘ nyng Self, is surely the next to it; for
 ‘ Selfishness is the most treacherous, deceit-
 ‘ ful Enemy in the World, and of all Views,
 ‘ the hardest both to find out, and cast out.
 ‘ The World is so great with some Men,
 ‘ that God and everlasting Life are as no-
 ‘ thing; they are so full of the Creature,
 ‘ that they have no Room for the Creator;
 ‘ so busie about Earth, that they have but
 ‘ little Time for Heaven. Lord, let my
 ‘ Meditations of Death prove effectual, to
 ‘ wean me from the World, and to make
 ‘ me live a holy Life, without which, my
 ‘ meditating, speaking, and writing of
 ‘ Death, will avail me little. Lord, work in
 ‘ me both to will and to do, of thy good
 ‘ pleasure.

— I am told, *That if I be heartily con-
 cerned about my Soul and Eternity, and carefully
 seek the Favour of God through Christ. If I strive
 against Sin, make Conscience of my Words and
 Ways, and have Respect to all God's Command-
 ments; I have Reason to hope, that notwith-
 standing my daily Infirmities, my spiritual State
 is good; I think, I can truly say, that I
 “ neither love nor delight in any Sin, and
 “ desire always to be found in the way of
 “ my Duty; Lord, grant I may not deceive
 “ my Self.*

— One faith; 'It is my certain Duty, to seek Heaven with all the Fervour of my Soul, and Diligence of my Life: Everlasting Glory should be preferred before perishing Vanity; I am sure, this World will shortly be nothing to me, and therefore it is next to nothing now. Either Joy or Misery is near at Hand to every Man; this should awaken us to cry, to search, to beg, to strive, to watch, to spare no Care, or Cost, or Labour, to make all sure in a Matter of such Weight. This should be done with Speed, with Zeal and Earnestness, and a full Resolution of Soul. Who can stand dallying, as most Men do, at the Door of Eternity, when they believe their immortal Souls must be there shortly!

'I cannot say, that I am prepared for Death as I ought to be, but am endeavouring it the best I can. I am sensible that my Time on Earth is short and uncertain. Mr. Fox saith; 'You gray-headed Sinners, against whom Death hath raised his Batteries; you have but a few Sands in your Glass, your departing Hour cannot be far off, your Candle is in the Sock-
'et, and will be a stinking Snuff shortly, the next Blast the House may fall. You that lean on your Staves, and look through your Spectacles, you are just ready to enter into Eternity; if you do not mind your great Work immediately, wo, wo be to you for ever! Poor Mortals, since you cannot prevent Death, make all the Preparation you can for it; for it is the
'grand

‘ grand Business of your Life. These good
 ‘ Sayings of Mr. Fox I often consult, and
 ‘ am much affected with them ; I take them
 ‘ to be spoken to my self ; for I am under
 ‘ those Symptoms of old Age he mentions ;
 ‘ On this Occasion he writes these Verses ;
 ‘ which we will insert, tho’ divers such
 ‘ Pieces of his plain Poetry we have o-
 ‘ mitted.

*My Head is gray, my Time is almost spent ;
 Prepare for Death, O wicked Heart repent.
 When Death doth call away, then go I must,
 My Soul to God, my Body to the Dust.
 Christ dy’d for me, my Hope is fix’d there ;
 I hope in Mercy, yet I live in Fear.
 I fear my God, yet other Fears I have ;
 I’ve broke his Laws, why should he own and save
 A wicked One, that spent his Days in Sin,
 That knew his Word, and what’s contain’d therein ?
 In Mercy pardon all I’ve done amiss,
 Through Christ my Lord, my Happiness and Bliss.*

— ‘ I am now at the last Stage of my
 ‘ Life ; I may well expect the Summons of
 ‘ Death every Day ; my Time is even at
 ‘ an End ; O let not me be one of those,
 ‘ that desire to die the Death of the righ-
 ‘ teous, but will not live the Life of the
 ‘ righteous ; but let it be my chief Care,
 ‘ my earnest Endeavour to serve God, and
 ‘ please him, lest Death should come upon
 ‘ me, like a Thief in the Night, or
 ‘ surprize me at Midnight, as the Bride-
 ‘ groom did the sleeping Virgins that had no
 ‘ Oil.

Mr. Gouge saith, ' O Sinner, it had been
 ' better for thee never to have been born,
 ' than not to be born again; 'tis as neces-
 ' sary as Heaven and Happiness. I beseech
 ' Thee, for thy precious Soul's sake, stir
 ' up thy self to work out thy Salvation.
 ' This is excellent Advice, Lord, give me
 ' Grace to take it.

—— ' I will not for a few Mercy Hours,
 ' hazard my eternal Safety; I desire not to
 ' flatter my self, or think better of my
 ' State than it is; but would judge my
 ' self, that I may not be judged of the Lord;
 ' for as old Mr. Henry us'd to say, when we
 ' set our Sins before our Faces in Repentance
 ' and Confession, God casts them behind
 ' his Back in Pardon and Remission; but
 ' if we carelessly cast them behind our
 ' Back, God justly sets them before his
 ' Face.

—— ' Whether we are ready or unrea-
 ' dy, Death will not stay; 'tis the greatest
 ' Change that can pass upon us; it carries
 ' us from all present Enjoyments, turns
 ' the Body to Dust, brings the Soul into
 ' the Presence of God, removes us from
 ' Time to Eternity; the Awfulness of the
 ' Change, should make us careful to get
 ' ready, and it's no easy Thing to prepare
 ' as we should for Death. The whole Time
 ' of our Life, is not more than sufficient;
 ' we have no Time to lose or squander a-
 ' way; we have many Sins to repent of,
 ' many Graces to obtain; Temptations to
 ' resist, Difficulties to break through, Du-
 ' ties to perform; we must get our Guilt

‘ removed, our Hearts purified, our Natures
 ‘ refined, the Image of God impress’d on
 ‘ us, and all our Corruptions mortified. Strive
 ‘ to live much in a little Time. *Live apace*
 ‘ in this Sense, dispatch the great Business
 ‘ of Life out of Hand. This Paragraph he
 glean’d out of Mr. *Calamy*’s Sermon on the
 Death of Mr. *Sylveſter*.

— ‘ Meditation of Death, hath been
 ‘ my frequent Practice many Years; but (as
 Mr. *Burghal* ſaith) ‘ it is but loſt Labour,
 ‘ unleſs that Meditation draw us to ſeri-
 ‘ ous Preparation for it. Biſhop *Patrick*
 ſaith; ‘ O let it pleaſe my God, to ſtreng-
 ‘ then me in my holy Reſolutions, till I
 ‘ arrive at his heavenly Court; O let his
 ‘ Spirit breath upon me, and carry away my
 ‘ Soul in holy Deſires towards him; let
 ‘ him guide my Courſe through this trou-
 ‘ bleſome Sea, on which I am toſs’d, and
 ‘ bring me ſafe to a quiet Haven of eternal
 ‘ Reſt and Peace.

— ‘ Death, and Preparation for it, I
 ‘ deſire to make the chief Subjects of my
 ‘ Meditation, according to my weak and
 ‘ mean Capacity. I hope, my merciful Fa-
 ‘ ther will accept me, who knows my
 ‘ Frame, and remembers I am but Duſt.
 ‘ A religious Life is certainly the happieſt
 ‘ Life we can live in this World; ’tis plea-
 ‘ ſant while we live, and comfortable when
 ‘ we die, it makes a Death-bed eaſy.

— ‘ God in his great Wiſdom hath
 ‘ left us all at Uncertainties, as to the Time
 ‘ of our Death, that we may be always on
 ‘ our

' our Guard, and improve our Time. Let
 ' us frequently put this Question to our
 ' selves, where must I be for ever? I have
 ' lived so long, what have I done all this
 ' while? Do I find my self better than I
 ' was some Years ago? Am I more heaven-
 ' ly-minded? Do I prepare for another World
 ' before I am called out of this?

About two Months before he died, he be-
 gan to read Monsieur *Drelincourt's Consolation*
against the Fear of Death. ' I purpose (saith
 he) ' to transcribe several Things out of it,
 ' since it is a Book which treats much of
 ' Death; for such Books I have much stu-
 ' died of late Years. The last Thing he
 wrote in his Book, and we suppose the last
 he ever wrote was, a Prayer proper for
 one dying, out of *Drelincourt.*

June 1st, 1709. (which was about ten Days
 before he died) he thus wrote; ' It hath
 ' been my Desire these many Years, to pre-
 ' pare for my Death; to that End, I have used
 ' my best Endeavours to make my Peace with
 ' God; it is my great Comfort that I have
 ' taken this Method for 8 or 10 Years, to be
 ' always expecting Death's Approach. These
 ' Endeavours I have used with much Weak-
 ' ness and Imperfection, so that I may well
 ' say, I am but an unprofitable Servant;
 ' if my Heart doth not much deceive me,
 ' I desire to renounce all Things, and to
 ' rest only upon Christ; Lord, what need
 ' have I of thy Grace and Favour, and the
 ' Assistance of thy holy Spirit; which I
 ' humbly beg for the Sake of my blessed
 ' Lord and Saviour.

Almost

Almost every Page of his Books, hath some Passage or other concerning Death : Over his Chamber-door was written, *Memento mori* ; many of those Scriptures which speak of Death, he got fairly written, and hung up in a Frame, with a Death's Head under them.

XVIII. *The Meditations and Prayers, which he prepared for the Use of his Death-bed.*

He began these about 1700, and continued them at Times after. He called to his Son to read them to him, a few Hours before he died.

' I am going the Way of all Flesh, and find that Death is very near me ; and I am now lanching into Eternity. What may be the Issue of this Illness, God knows, who is only wise ; I am often assaulted with Doubts and Fears, concerning the State of my precious Soul, which is my chief Concern ; yet, I hope, I shall never despair of the Mercies of God, for they are infinite, and the Sufferings of Christ are meritorious ; here is my main Stay and Strength ; here is the Hope of my Salvation.

' I humbly confess, to my Shame and Sorrow, that my Sins have been many and great ; I cannot plead Innocency of Life, no, nor justify the best of my Actions, but acknowledge my self sinful, and an unprofitable Servant ; O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from this Body of Sin and Death ! None but Christ, none but Christ.

' My

‘ My only Hope and Comfort is, I have to
 ‘ do with a merciful God, who will abundantly
 ‘ pardon all penitent Sinners; and a
 ‘ blessed Saviour, who hath redeemed me
 ‘ with his precious Blood, and is now interceding
 ‘ with his Father in my Behalf: O
 ‘ what a Comfort is this to a poor doubting
 ‘ Sinner.

I will say with Mr. *Gearing*; ‘ O Lord, thy
 ‘ Son hath offered Satisfaction, and Thou
 ‘ hast accepted it; Thou, O my Saviour,
 ‘ hast laid down thy Life for mine: And
 ‘ thy Father and my Father is well pleased
 ‘ with it; Blood is paid, Justice is satisfied,
 ‘ Heaven Doors are widened, thy Arms open
 ‘ to receive me, nothing wanting but my
 ‘ Heart; make it such as Thou wouldst
 ‘ have it (good Lord,) then take it to thy
 ‘ self. I have sinned against Mercy, but
 ‘ not above Mercy; for Thou art a God of
 ‘ infinite Mercy to all that repent.

‘ Lord, I owe Thee a Death, O let it not
 ‘ be terrible, then take thy own Time!
 ‘ What shall I say or do, to make my Peace
 ‘ with God, whom I have so much offended;
 ‘ Lord, I repent of all my Sins from the
 ‘ very Bottom of my Heart; I will with
 ‘ Sorrow and Shame confess them, and will
 ‘ beg Pardon and Forgiveness of my merciful
 ‘ Father; I will cast my self on the
 ‘ Rock Christ Jesus, my only Saviour, who
 ‘ laid down his Life to save my precious
 ‘ Soul; blessed be God for Jesus Christ, the
 ‘ inestimable Gift. Lord, increase my Faith,
 ‘ without which it is impossible to please
 ‘ Thee.

‘ Why

' Why should I be loth to part from this
 ' troublesome World, or unwilling to die,
 ' and enter into those Joys which my blessed
 ' Saviour hath purchased for me; all this
 ' is for want of Assurance: Doubts and Fears
 ' are apt to arise; yet in Thee, O Lord, do I
 ' put my Trust.

' O merciful Lord God, whenever Thou
 ' pleasest to cast me upon my sick Bed, and
 ' bring the bitter Pangs of Death upon me;
 ' then be with me, support and comfort me
 ' in that Time of my Distress; strengthen
 ' me and help me, that I may have Power
 ' to resist my Enemy, who may strongly as-
 ' fault me when I am weakest; O bring me
 ' through that great Trial with some Ease
 ' and Comfort, and for thy Mercy's sake, lay
 ' no more upon me than I am able to bear,
 ' for Thou knowest my Frame. When Thou
 ' requirest my Soul, embrace it in the Arms
 ' of thy tender Mercy; let thy good Angels
 ' guard it into its everlasting Rest, for Christ's
 ' sake.

' Lord, give me Wisdom from above, that
 ' I may duly consider the Shortness and Un-
 ' certainty of Life. Give me Grace to make
 ' Preparation for the Hour of Death, which
 ' Time draws very near. It is my Resolu-
 ' tion, by divine Assistance, to submit to the
 ' Will and Pleasure of my merciful Father;
 ' it is the Lord, let him do what seemeth
 ' him good: If he lay his Hand heavy upon
 ' me, I confess, it is my Deserts; if he be
 ' favourable, it is his Mercy and Goodness;
 ' therefore I hope, I shall never repine at the
 ' Lord's Dealing, nor despair of his Mercies.

' When

' When Pain, and Sickness, and Anguish
 ' beset me on every Side, and Death seizeth
 ' me, then let me call to mind the Sufferings
 ' of my dear Saviour for my Sins, tho' he com-
 ' mitted no Sin; how his precious Body was
 ' torn, and his precious Blood spilt, yet he
 ' patiently bore all with Submission to his
 ' Father's Will; and shall not I a poor, sin-
 ' ful, vile, wretched Creature, patiently
 ' suffer whatever the only wise God pleaseth
 ' to lay upon me? then let me call to mind,
 ' the Folly and Wickedness of my younger
 ' Days, even the Sins of my whole Life.
 ' Sins bring all Miseries upon us; *I will bear*
 ' *the Indignation of the Lord, because I have sin-*
 ' *ned against him: Correct me, O Lord, but with*
 ' *Judgment, not in thy Anger, lest thou bring me*
 ' *to nothing.* I have deserved thy hot Dis-
 ' pleasure, but Lord, in Judgment remember
 ' Mercy, and comfort thy poor Servant in
 ' Distress.

' Truly my Soul waits upon God, from
 ' him comes my Salvation. Thy loving
 ' Kindness is better than Life; Lord, help
 ' me in this Trouble, be merciful to me, for
 ' my Soul trusteth in thee; in the Shadow
 ' of thy Wings will I make my Refuge,
 ' &c.

Have Mercy upon me, O God, according to thy
loving Kindness, &c. Psal. LI. 1, 2, 3. ' It is my
 ' greatest Trouble, that I have sinned against
 ' so good a God; yet this comforts me,
 ' that a troubled Spirit, a broken, contrite Heart,
 ' O God, thou wilt not despise. Enter not into
 ' Judgment with thy Servant; O Lord. Remember,

O Lord, thy tender Mercies. Turn thee unto me,
and have Mercy upon me, Psal. XXV. 16, 17, 18.

' When the Pains of Death get hold of me;
' then, good Lord, give me Sense to pray,
' and Patience to bear what thou layest upon
' me ; then be Thou with me, and comfort
' me for thy Mercies sake. Prayer and Pa-
' tience are the best Remedies for a dying
' Man ; then let thy Strength appear in my
' Weakness, and enable me to overcome all
' the Enemies of my Salvation.

' Let the Promises of the Gospel be com-
' fortable then to my distressed Soul: As that
Joh. III 16, 17. 1 Tim. I. 15. Lord, preserve my
Soul, for I desire to be holy, Psal. LXXXVI.

2, 3, 4, 5, 6. ' When the Pains of Death be-
' set me, where then shall I seek for Help,
' Ease and Comfort, but with Thee, my God?
' Then, good Lord, be Thou with me, sup-
' port and comfort me, smile upon me, for
' thy Benignity is better than Life.

' Christ is the only Physician that can give
' Ease to a poor dying Sinner ; remember me
' then, O Lord, with the Favour Thou
' bearest to thy chosen, visit me with thy
' Salvation. Upon my sick Bed I desire to
' remember, *Prov. III. 11, 12. Despise not the*
Chastening of the Lord, neither faint. O let me
' have such a perfect Subjection to the Father
' of Spirits, that this Chastisement may be for
' my Profit, that I may be a Partaker of thy
' Holiness. O Thou Captain of my Salva-
' tion, who wast made perfect through suf-
' fering, sanctify to me all my Pains and Ter-
' rors, make me to bear them cheerfully
' and thankfully ; chasten me as Thou pleas-
' est

est here, so that I may not be condemn'd in the World to come.

' Our Afflictions, tho' sometimes severe and painful, are but for a *Moment*, and they are nothing in comparison with the Torments of Hell, which are eternal and intolerable, our God is gracious, and will *not always chide*.

' If in Health I have made Preparation for Death, when it comes I have not a new Work to begin, but an old Work to renew.

' Stay thy self, O my Soul, upon the Rock Christ Jesus, who is a merciful and faithful Priest, a sweet Shepherd, his Rod and Staff shall comfort thee. In the Agonies of Death, cast thy self into the Arms of thy blessed Saviour. If Satan assault thee, by setting before thee the Greatness and Multitude of thy Sins, remember that sweet Place, *Mic. VII. 18. Who is a God like unto thee, pardoning Iniquity?* And that *Isai. I. 18. Though your Sins have been as Scarlet they shall be white as Snow.*

Out of Dr. Andrew River's last Hours
' Lord, let not this Trial exceed my Strength
' O how light is this Chastisement if compar'd with my Fault! and this temporal Pain, if compared with eternal Torments, from which I am redeemed by him that poured out his Soul unto Death for me
' Lord, let not thy good Spirit depart from me, that in this Conflict I may be more than a Conquerour. Lord, let nothing separate me from Thee, or cause me to doubt of thy Love and Favour.

' Lord

‘ Lord, make my Pains tolerable, or furnish me with Fortitude to bear them, that I may not offend with my Tongue. Crucify, O Lord, the old Man, that the Body of Sin may be destroyed, and I may rise again to a new Life.

‘ Help me to wait with Patience, till my Change comes; continuethy wonted Mercy to thy poor Servant. Make Thou my Bed in my Distress and Misery, that I faint not under thy Hand.

‘ I have cast the Care of me, of mine, of all my Affairs, upon God; let him do with my Body as pleaseth him, so it be but well with my Soul; I lament not my leaving the World. I have liv’d long enough in it, have made Trial of it, and find it is all Vanity and Vexation of Spirit.

‘ To whom shall I go for Help, O Lord? In whom is my Hope, truly in Thee? I desire *to depart, and to be with Christ*; it is enough, Lord, receive now my Soul. When I leave my Body to the Earth, I commit my Spirit into the Hands of God who gave it. I know this Tabernacle cannot be dissolved without Pain: The Flesh must suffer and fall; but it matters not, provided the Soul obtain new Strength, and I arrive at a better Place. Lord strengthen me, and help my Infirmities; be not far from me in the Day of my Sorrow; say unto my Soul, I am thy Salvation. Have pity on me, O God, and deal graciously with me; let Death be my Passage to Life eternal; I hope the Combat will not continue long; bring to pass, O Lord, that the End may crown the Work.

‘ Lord

' Work. Receive my Soul to thy self, O
 ' Lord, I yield it into thy Hands, Thou
 ' hast redeemed it, O God of Truth. The
 ' Lord shall perfect that which concerns his
 ' Glory, and my eternal Salvation.

' I desire and hope, that I shall submit to
 ' God's good Will and Pleasure, and not
 ' wish to live any longer; when God calls,
 ' and my appointed Time is come, then
 ' will I call on the Lord, and say, I have
 ' waited for thy Salvation, leave me not.
 ' When my Heart fails, Lord, be Thou my
 ' Helper. Deliver my Soul from Hell, my
 ' Darling from the Power of the Lion. Let
 ' my Soul live, and it shall praise Thee.

' Lord loose these Bands; how long Lord
 ' Jesus, how long! Jesus, thou Son of David,
 ' have Mercy on me, and receive my Soul!
 ' O happy Day, when I shall depart out of
 ' this sinful World, and go to Heaven! Lord,
 ' I feel my Strength failing me, this earthly
 ' Tabernacle; I am ready to depart, Breath
 ' fails, and Death appears ready to strike the
 ' last Stroke; but I know I shall rise again
 ' to behold thy Glory.

' It is my Thoughts, that these poor Medi-
 ' tations may be useful and comfortable to
 ' me, when I lie upon my sick and dying
 ' Bed; then I hope the Lord will in Mer-
 ' cy remember me, and take Pity on me, and
 ' accept of me and my poor Services, thro'
 ' Christ my Saviour; Lord, if it please
 ' Thee, grant me that Favour, that when I
 ' lie a dying, I may have the Use of my
 ' Reason.

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IN these his Meditations of Death, and Preparations for it, there appears something extraordinary; and one cannot but wish now to know, what was the End, the Exit of such a Conversation, and how he finish'd his Course at last; of which, take his short Account.

On Friday June 10. 1709. he rode to *Cheerbrook*, where he had liv'd about 30 Years, walked with his Son in the Gardens and Orchards; there he was taken with the Gripes, Distemper he had been afflicted with some time before; but he rode near two Miles after, designed to have given his old Minister at *Wimbury* a Visit, but his Pain increasing, he hasten'd home, had a bad Night: In the Morning when his Son came to him, he said; 'I am very bad, but I am willing to die, having liv'd above the Age of Man; he expressed his Hopes of Salvation through Christ; he said his House was in order, and he hoped, his Soul also. He would by no means have any Physician sent for, but said, it was Time for him to leave the World, and it did not become him at that Age to call a Physician. About Noon on *Saturday*, he was perswaded to take some Drops to ease his violent Pain, and had for a few Hours great Ease; but at Night his Pain return'd again. On the Morning of the Lord's-Day, he

of

he spoke to his Wife and Son about his Burial, which he would have to be private, and ordered Matters, as if he had known that that must be his dying Day, as it proved, tho' they about him thought he might recover, or at least have continued many Days, being of a strong Body, and considering his Age, of a healthy Constitution, and because he bore his Pains with such Patience, without Groan or Complaint; but when he was ask'd how he did, he said, *worse and worse*, I cannot live long in these Pains

At Noon, being the Lord's-day, he desired to be prayed for publickly, and called to his Son, to read to him the foregoing Meditations of Death, which he did at several Times; and he said, they refreshed and comforted him; and it was for such a Time as this, that he had drawn them up; they were also very affecting to those about him; he also repeated divers of them himself.

He said to his Son, *I would not for all the World; that I had my Work of Preparation for Death to do now.* About two a Clock, he called to his Son to pray by him; which he did; and at the Close of his Prayer, added some of the Petitions, which the good Man had prepared in his Book for such a Time. ---He then bid him go to the publick Worship, which he did, not thinking his Father's End had been so near as it prov'd. In about an Hour and an half, he returned and found a great Change. His Voice was gone, and it appear'd, he was dying; but he did not groan, or make any Complaint.

His

His Son kneeled down to speak some comfortable Words to him in his dying Conflict; to which he answered, *I shall be well presently*, and scarce spoke a Word more: The Minister of the Parish came in and prayed with him, and commended his Soul into the Hands of the Almighty: He had just before put out his Hand to a Friend that came in to see him, by which it appeared he was sensible; but quickly after, while the Minister was with him, about six of the Clock, he breathed his last, June 12th, 1709.

On Tuesday following, his Corps was carried on a mourning Carriage to *Wibunbury*, attended by a great Number of People. The Captain of his Company, who was Major of the Train-bands of the County, attended the Funeral with his Company, put the Drum in Mourning, march'd with their Arms, and gave him several Volleys of Shot over his Grave.

Mr. Bromfield preached his Funeral-Sermon on the Text which he himself chose, *Psal. CIII. 13, 14. Like as a Father pities his Children, so the Lord pities them that fear him: for he knows our Frame, and remembers we are but Dust.* The Reason he gives for chusing that Text was, because he had chosen that choice and excellent Psalm (as he calls it) for the Subject of his Morning Meditations for a great while; and usually repeated it all to himself as soon as he awak'd, before he rose: And these Words particularly, he thought very comfortable to a doubting, drooping Soul.

Soul. He had himself drawn up Meditations upon those Words, to the Length of a Sermon.

The Minister, in the Close of his Discourse, spoke of him thus ; A good Name hath this our deceased Brother left behind him ; and a good Character do all those deserve, that are so diligent in the Discharge of their Duty, both to God and Man, as he was. He gave Proof of his Love to God, by his constant Resort to his House and Ordinances, his Affection to the Prayers of the Church, and devout joining in them ; his attentive hearing the Word read and preached, and his frequent and devout communicating. And he kept a constant Course of religious Exercise in his Family ; a Thing too much neglected among us. I doubt not, but his Worshipping of God in secret, was daily and devout, agreeable to his Care of Family-Worship. He took great Care, that the Lord's-Day was kept holy, both by himself, and by his Family ; and further evidenced his Love to God, by his bold and ready appearing against Profaneness and Immorality.

He was a very useful Man in his Neighbourhood, being ready to do good to all, both rich and poor, according to his Ability and Opportunity. He was very happy in the Love of his Neighbours, was active and successful in the Blessed Work of Peacemaking among them ; was just in his Dealings, a faithful Friend, a careful Father, and a very affectionate Husband ; in a Word,
his

his Conversation shewed him to be a true Lover of Virtue and Goodness, and a very serious Christian.

Upon his Death-bed he was patient, and wholly resign'd to the Will of God, in a humble Hope of his Mercy in Christ; and at his Departure, had the Prayers of his Minister, by whom his Soul was commended into the Hands of the Almighty; and into the State of blessed Souls I question not but that of our deceased Brother is receiv'd; for, *like as a Father pitieth his Children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him; for he knows our Frame, and remembers we are but Dust.*

He was generally lamented at his Death, as he had been universally beloved and respected by all that knew him while he liv'd. The Members of Parliament for the County, and other Gentlemen of the first Rank, would visit him at his House. When the Troubles were in *Ireland*, Col. Cook's Family lodg'd at his House for some Time, and always after express'd a great Kindness for him; and he retained a mighty Respect for that worthy Colonel, and his Family and Friends. He made some Verses to be added to the Inscription on his Grave-stone, if his Son thought fit; but this, saith he, or any other, or none at all, I leave to your Discretion.

Lieutenant *Richard Illidge* died *June 12th, 1709.* aged 72. In his Life-time he had served four Sovereigns, three Kings, and one Queen, as a Sub-Officer in the Militia of this County, for the Space of near 50 Years.

*Now slain by Death, who spares no one,
And lies full low under this Stone:
Take heed and read, and thou shalt see,
As I am now, so shalt thou be,
Rotting in dark and silent Dust;
Prepare for Death, for die thou must.
Life is uncertain, Death is sure;
Sin is the Wound, Christ is the Cure.*

M E M E N T O M O R I.

He was of a middle Stature, strong and well-set; of a healthy Constitution, comely Visage, inclining to feed, which made him spare in his Diet, eating little but at Dinner.

When his Friends told him, that if he should leave off worldly Business, and retire into Privacy, he would find it a melancholy sort of Life: He answered; "I thank God, my Time never lies upon my Hand, I can cultivate the little Garden of my Soul, when I have no other Business, and I have good Books for my Companions. — I may with Shame and Sorrow (saith he) look back upon an ill spent Life; my Childhood and Youth were Folly and Vanity; my riper Years were mostly spent in carking and caring, and seeking after the Profits and Pleasures of this World; and I have too much neglected the main Business, my Duty to God; Lord, I repent; Lord, I believe, help thou my Unbelief; free me from every Weight, and the Sin that doth most easily beset me."

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